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Now What? A multi-dimensional analysis of the post primary educational prospects for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon

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Abstract

The Syrian civil war is undeniably one of the largest humanitarian crises of modern time. With host countries, such as Lebanon, taking in a disproportionately large influx of refugees in their already fragile national structure, there erupts a complex situation of meeting the needs of the refugee population without compromising the local population. Thus, while education up to the end of secondary school is provided free for refugee children through international and national funding, there are many challenges with regards to not only the access to secondary and higher education, but the role of post grade nine (or post primary school) education for refugee children.

This dissertation outlines the post primary school options for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon while at the same time analyzing the perceived options and reasoning behind the choices taken by the refugees themselves. The research will be conducted using an adapted form of grounded theory which does not assume a certain approach to education is ideal and takes on the viewpoints of multiple stakeholders. This two-part analysis includes an open-ended questionnaire sent to policy makers at various governmental and NGO levels in Lebanon as well as a systematic internet search to unveil all post primary school options for Syrian refugees. The second part of the dissertation consists of interviews with refugee children about to finish their primary school years, and refugee teenagers who have made their post primary school choices in Lebanon in an attempt to reveal how refugees view secondary and higher education; what choices they make after primary school and the obstacles they may face in order to meet their educational goals. These are contrasted with interviews of Lebanese students who attend schools in the same areas. The dissertation ends with insights regarding the theoretical implications of education for refugees as well as policy level recommendations.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

After a decade, in which there have been over 500 thousand deaths, 5 million refugees and 12 million injuries, the Syrian Civil War, is one of the most catastrophic events of the 21st century. The complexity of the situation has baffled the international community- both those hosting the large number of refugees and those providing financial and other forms of aid. During this time, one country has been hosting a disproportionately large number of those refugees. Lebanon is currently home to over 1.5 million Syrian refugees in addition to refugees from Palestine, Iraq and other Arab countries (Humud, 2017). It is estimated that refugees in Lebanon currently account for 25 per cent of the country's population. This proves especially demanding for a country already struggling to provide healthcare, education and basic resources for its own population. The situation further increases in complexity when a majority of those refugees are children seeking the basic human right of education. These children may not only suffer severe psychological trauma, but many have gaps of years in their education and are struggling with a new school system and expectations (UNHCR, 2014). The international community has provided Lebanon with various forms of aid in order to provide all children in Lebanon, including Syrian refugees, free education up until year nine (Ministry of Education and Higher Education Lebanon, 2014). As of 2015, UNESCO has covered the registration fees for Syrian refugee students up until the end of secondary school (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Many policies and much effort have been implemented by the government, and NGOs have been assisting in order to facilitate the education of the refugee youth. Yet, despite these efforts, 95 per cent of Syrian refugee youth between the ages of 15-24 are not enrolled in any type of formal education program, and a majority of those who are in education are enrolled in programs far

below their age level (Human Rights Watch, 2018). To make matters more complicated, current policies prohibit the employment of refugees in various professions in Lebanon. Thus, the options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon are limited, and children are being forced to make difficult decisions and face darker realities regarding their futures.

This dissertation proposes to address three research questions: first, what are the post primary options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Second, what are Syrian refugees' perceptions regarding education and their options post primary school and what are their perceptions regarding the barriers in reaching those post-primary options. Third, When the views of young refugees are compared with their Lebanese counterparts, do they share the same choices or are there differences in the views regarding the purpose of education and their post primary school options.

The research will be conducted using an adapted form of grounded theory (Haig and Evers, 2016) which does not assume a certain approach to education is ideal and takes on the viewpoints of multiple stakeholders. This will be done by first outlining the options available post primary school for Syrian refugee children. For the sake of this study, primary school is assumed to be years one to nine which is education prior to the Lebanese secondary education which commences at year ten. This is for two reasons. First, education is compulsory for children between the ages of six and 15 in Lebanon. Second, at the time of this dissertation, only 23 per cent of Syrian refugees between the ages of 15 and 17 were enrolled in schools with only 3 per cent enrolled in upper secondary schools (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, 2018). The first stage of this study consists of a questionnaire sent to various policy makers working for the United Nations High Commissions for Refugees (UNHCR), the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon (MoEHE), researchers in universities in Lebanon, administrators and teachers at public

schools in Lebanon and professionals from various NGOs in Lebanon who deal with refugee education. This questionnaire asks the respondents to list the post primary opportunities for refugee children and whether or not the opportunities are being chosen and why. This is coupled with an internet search of possible post-primary school options which includes a list of agencies providing opportunities or scholarships for Syrian refugee children after year nine.

The second stage of the dissertation seeks to triangulate the views articulated above with the perspectives of Syrian refugees by inquiring about what they choose to pursue following primary school and why. This is done through a semi-structured interview of eight Syrian refugees. Two of these interviewees are Syrian refugee boys around the age of 15 years and approaching the 9th grade in order to assess the child's motivation and plans after primary school. Another two are interviews of Syrian refugee girls of the same age range who are also interviewed for the same reasons. Two boys and two girls who are in their late teens or early twenties are also interviewed in order to see what real options they had and what led them to where they are in life. These are contrasted with a group of interviews of eight Lebanese students of the same age groups and from the same area and general socioeconomic background.

The purpose in developing this triangulation is to see to what extent policy makers and educationists' views are consistent with refugees' perceived choices based on their perceptions of the value of education. Here the question is whether the policy makers and young refugees share a view of the problems they confront. The views of the young refugees are then compared with their Lebanese counterparts. Do they share the same choices or are there inequalities in the way Syrian students are treated when compared to those from Lebanon? In turn, this addresses one of the key questions underlying the treatment of refugees. Are their choices the same as those of Lebanese students? If so, is this because there are systemic problems across education

and the opportunities for paid work in Lebanon or are there, inequalities as perceived by the Syrian refugees? While the focus is on the perceptions of these young people, statistical data of the kind offered above and described below can provide a form of check against policy makers and students' perceptions.

Data from the internet search is analyzed not only to determine the number and forms of opportunities for refugees, but to determine the realistic accessibility of these opportunities and to determine possible barriers. All professional interviews and questionnaires are analyzed through a thematic analysis. Likewise, an adapted version of the grounded theory approach, described in later chapters, is used to analyze the refugee and Lebanese interviews (Haig & Evers, 2016). A discussion around the common themes that arise from the various interviews, internet searches and surveys are discussed with reference to current theoretical perspectives. Key policy recommendations are made.

The rest of the introduction provides an overview of the Lebanese context. First, the background of the Syrian civil war is discussed followed by the context of the Syrians in Lebanon. An overview of the Lebanese education system is provided. This is followed with an analysis of the challenges Syrian refugees may face in Lebanese classrooms based on already published information. The introduction concludes with an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 Background on the Syrian Civil War

The Syrian civil war evolved from uprisings against the Asaad regime's capture and torture of two teenage boys who had written anti-government slogans on the school wall during

the Arab Spring in 2011 (Aljazeera, 2017). What subsided quite quickly in other Arab Spring countries such as Jordan, Bahrain and Tunisia, only escalated in Syria. Within a short period of time, the Asaad regime's violent backlash against what the West had labeled as pro-democracy protestors led to the organization of several rebel armed forces (Aljazeera, 2017). This was only complicated by the sectarian background of the country and the uprising of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) groups in the region. Since then, the Syrian Civil War has evolved into what many consider as a proxy war with the Shiite Asaad regime backed financially and militarily by Russia, Iran, and Lebanon's Hezbollah and the oppositional groups supported by countries such as the US, UK, France, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia (BBC News, 2016). Both sides of the conflict have been convicted of committing war crimes, such as the use of illegal chemical weapons, by the international community.

Information regarding the recent developments of the Syrian civil war varies from source to source and makes it quite difficult to provide an unbiased depiction of the events. For example, in 2019 there were conflicting stories regarding the source of an attack on a Turkish observation point in Idlib with Russia claiming Syrian rebels were the attackers while the West blamed the Syrian army (Osborne , 2019). There have been several attempts at ceasefires in the past couple of years. As of July 2017, international negotiations resulted in a fifth ceasefire attempt in several key areas in Syria (Sherlock, 2017). While this has been mostly successful in the areas where it has been implemented, the war has continued to become increasingly complicated with the involvement of multiple foreign powers such as Kurdish forces, Turkey and Russia (Gunes , 2019). There are claims that Kurdish groups, supported by the US, have tried to establish a Kurdish state in the Turkish and Syrian border which has put Turkish troops in the midst of the war (Perry, 2019). Turkey has been an opponent of Assad and a supporter of the

Free Syrian Army. On the other hand, Russia has been adamant about ensuring Assad remains in power as it has been leading airstrikes in Syria. Areas such as Idlib, Ghouta, and Douma have been heavily attacked despite ceasefire attempts with renewed violence towards the end of 2019 (Human Rights Watch, 2019).Thus, the future of the war in Syria is unknown. Regardless of when the war ends, Syria will have to endure years of rebuilding and restructuring making it highly likely that many of the refugees will be residing in their host countries for a significant amount of time.

1.2 Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Lebanon has a history of hosting refugees. There was a rapid influx of Armenian refugees in 1915 during the period of the Armenian Genocide (Harris & Harris , 2014). This large number of Armenians was integrated within Lebanese society and were given citizenship by the Lebanese government after the French withdrew in 1946 (Harris & Harris , 2014). The Palestinians on the other hand started entering the country after the 1970 Intifada and were denied Lebanese citizenship. Until today, there is a stark difference between Palestinians and Armenians, with the Palestinians live mostly in refugee camps and the Armenians having ministers and representation in congress (Migliorino, 2008). One theory for the differing treatment between Armenians and Palestinians is due to the Christian background of the Armenians who were given citizenship when the Europeans still had extensive power over Lebanon (Migliorino, 2008). The Palestinians on the other hand are primarily Muslim. Over the years, these Palestinian refugee camps have been the site of multiple battles with Lebanese forces (Maclean, 2019). Thus, as a possible response to the challenges of managing the Palestinian refugees when they entered the country, the government set up a strict “no refugee

camp policy" towards Syrians (Rainey, 2017). Nonetheless, hundreds of informal refugee camps do exist throughout Lebanon especially throughout the Beqaa valley (United Nations Higher Commissions for Refugees, 2015)

While the presence of refugees is common for the Lebanese, a Syrian presence in Lebanon has existed in various forms for some time. After the Lebanese civil war subsided in 1989, Syrian troops deployed in the country in what they claimed to be an effort to ensure sustainable peace (Safa, 2006). Yet, the Syrian army's presence was resented by a large percentage of the Lebanese population as the years went by. There were rumors of troops residing in homes and land lots, causing these estates to lose all value in the real estate market. Thus, when the Cedar Revolution occurred after the death of the Prime Minister Rafik AL Hariri in 2001, the Lebanese community was eager to push the Syrian troops out of the country (Safa, 2006). While those protests were successful, and the Syrian army withdrew, little did the Lebanese people know that the Syrians were to return to Lebanon 15 years later as refugees of the Syrian Civil war.

The Lebanese government's policies regarding the work and education of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon have rapidly changed and evolved since the onset of the war. UNHCR and other human rights organizations favor the support of refugees and their return to their home countries only when conditions permit, and they have criticized the Lebanese government for favoring the premature eviction of Syrian refugees. The Lebanese government on the other hand claim they have a duty to protect the Lebanese citizens' interests first and foremost and have thus implemented policies to support that notion. Lebanon did not sign the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which guarantees refugee children the right to primary education and the right to be treated as legal aliens with regards to further education (Masri &

Srour, 2014). Despite this, Syrians first entered Lebanon as refugees with the freedom to stay and work for the first six months before attaining official work permits in accordance with the 1993 bilateral Agreement for Economic and Social Cooperation and Coordination (Masri & Srour, 2014). Refugees registered with the UNHCR were allowed to work and live in Lebanon indefinitely (Lebanese Centre for Human Rights, 2018). In a country where job prospects for its own citizens were low, this agreement was cancelled in 2015 around the same time the Lebanese government asked the UNHCR to stop registering refugees. This meant Syrian refugees needed legal permits to work and live in Lebanon as did any foreign citizen. Even those already registered with the UNHCR had to pay for their own residency permits and those of family members above the age of 15 to remain in the country. Furthermore, those registered with UNHCR have had to sign a pledge not to work (UNHCR, 2016). After the 2015 law, unregistered refugees that came into the country legally had to seek work permits or sponsorships. Syrians with work permits are allowed to work legally in the country and are entitled to earn the minimum wage and earn social security (LEADERS consortium, 2019). Yet, seeking a work permit is a costly process at around $700 a year and requiring a Lebanese sponsor with a registered business who often makes the Syrian cover the cost of the visa with some Lebanese even making a business out of it (Human rights watch, 2016). If a Syrian wants to legally reside in Lebanon working on an agricultural plot of land or as a guard for a building, he could get sponsored with no right to work elsewhere and no social security. This costs the Lebanese sponsor $200, and the sponsor must provide housing. Again, most Lebanese sponsors make the employee pay this amount. The sponsored individual can bring his/her immediate family members but must pay $200 for every individual over the age of 15 (UNHCR, 2016). Laws up until 2018 required all Syrian youth over the age of 15 to attain residency permits. After

2018, a new law allowed Syrian youth, between the ages of 15 and 18, the ability to gain temporary legal residency for a maximum of two years which would help facilitate the completion of their schooling (General Directorate of General Security, 2018). When the new policies were put in place, those who were in the country illegally before 2015 had 5 days to exit the country and had to pay a fine of $633 or risk a permanent travel ban (UNHCR, 2016). Therefore, most refugees are not legally working or residing in the country (Saiid et. al, 2016).

Research has shown, the living conditions of these Syrian refugees vary from region to region and from individual to individual (Saiid et. al, 2016). It is quite common to see makeshift refugee camps in the Beqaa region where families are cramped almost a dozen per tent. Due to the No Refugee Camp policy, it is also very common to see refugee families in rented apartments spread around villages as well as the city. The situation for Syrian refugees has been gradually getting worse despite international aid efforts. As of 2016, the average income of a Syrian refugee was around $300 a month with 93 per cent claiming food insecurity and a large majority relying on UN assistance and coupons for basic food and care (Saiid et. al, 2016). This in part could be due to that fact that only one in five refugees have legal residency permits let alone work permits which allow them to work in the country legally (Saiid et. al, 2016). A majority of refugees are reliant on international aid. In 2014, the Ministry of Labor in Lebanon published a list of professions restricted to Lebanese (Annahar, 2014). This strict law forbade Syrians from opening businesses or occupying a majority of common professions especially when Lebanese were available to take the jobs. This was the beginning of the end of the Bilateral Agreement which a majority of refugees were using as their legal support to work in Lebanon. Thus, many work informally as gardeners and handy men with no legal contracts, guarantee of safety, or minimum wage. Due to the lack of job security and in an effort to ensure their own economic

sustainability, it is difficult to assume how education is perceived by Syrian youth. Yet, one inarguable fact is that post primary options are necessary to ensure Syrian refugee youth in Lebanon do not become a lost generation and are able to rebuild their country upon returning to Syria.

1.3 The Lebanese Education System

The Lebanese educational system comprises three distinct stages: primary, secondary and tertiary. Government primary schools begin classes for children from the age of three years, yet schooling is free and compulsory from the ages of 6 to 14 (UNESCO-UNEVOC , 2012). The primary, including the complementary school stage, goes until the ninth grade when students take a government official exam in Maths, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Arabic, English, History, and Geography in order to earn a Brevet certificate (UNESCO-UNEVOC , 2012). The Brevet certificate is required before students can commence their secondary school education. Alternatively, students may enter the vocational track after the eighth grade without the Brevet diploma. The language of instruction is English or French for the Maths and Sciences in all Lebanese schools and at all levels although some private schools offer different systems such as an IB or an American qualification (UNESCO-UNEVOC , 2012). After the successful completion of year nine and the Brevet certificate, students can either continue into year ten or go onto the vocational track. In year 11, students choose a scientific or humanities track and in year 12 students choose between four different specialist tracks (general science, life science, humanities, and economics tracks) and sit for a governmental examination to earn the Lebanese Baccalaureate Diploma. The structure of the Lebanese school system with the parallel vocational

track is further detailed in figure 1 below.

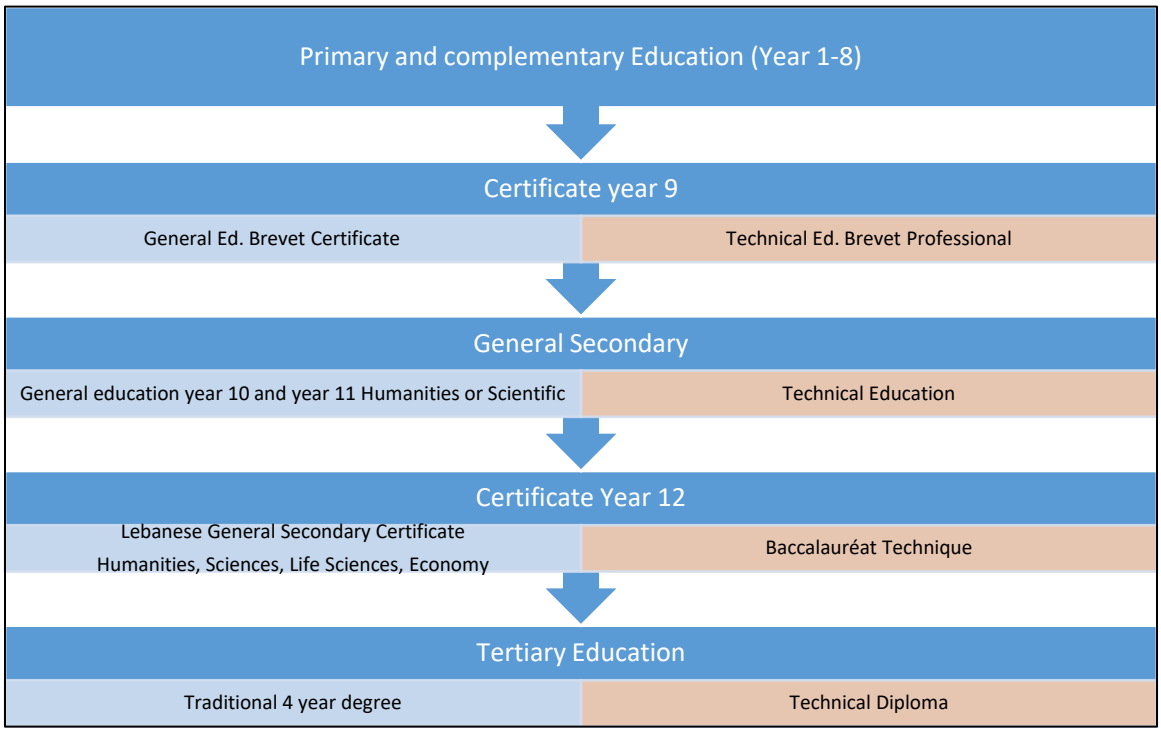

Figure 1: Lebanese Education System (adapted from. UNESCO-UNEVOC World TVET Database, 2012)

In Lebanon, approximately 60 per cent of students attend private schools, and around 40 per cent attend public schools (Abdul Hamied, et al., 2017). The vast majority of universities are private in Lebanon with one public university: the Lebanese National University. Vocational education is also a mixture of publicly funded education complexes as well as private educational providers (Abdul Hamied, et al., 2017).

The structure of Syrian schools does not differ greatly from those in the Lebanese school system. The Syrian educational system is also comprised of the three stages of primary, secondary, and tertiary where students must pass a governmental exam at the end of primary school before attending secondary school or alternatively selecting the vocational track (Al Hessan, et al., 2016). Students also have to pass a final examination at the end of secondary

school before being admitted to tertiary education. Yet, there are differences between the Lebanese and Syrian systems which are the source of some of the challenges Syrian students face. These differences are detailed in the next section.

1.4 Challenges for Syrian Refugees in Lebanese Schools

There have been numerous articles and UN reports which have looked at the unique challenges facing Syrian refugee children in Lebanese schools (e.g Parkinson, 2014; Human Rights Watch, 2016). While many of the children who enter Lebanon as refugees have suffered extreme stress and trauma from leaving their homes, others additionally enter the country with gaps of several years in their education (Human rights watch, 2016). The UN and other NGOs have worked with the Lebanese government to support the assimilation of refugee children within Lebanese public schools. This alone has posed several challenges for Syrian children. First, the infrastructure of Lebanese schools cannot hold the large number of additional students, and schools have capped the percent of non-Lebanese in the classroom at around 50% varying every year (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2014). Furthermore, the language of instruction of math and science in Lebanon are either English or French while in Syria the language of instruction for all subjects is Arabic (Watkins & Zyck, 2014). Students do study English in Syrian schools, but this is only for 2-3 hours a week which is insufficient to allow students to function in an EMI environment (Al Hessan, et al., 2016). Thus, students integrating into the Lebanese school system must learn an additional language. In addition, Lebanon requires students to pass official examinations at the end of 9^{th} grade and the end of 12^{th} grade in order to progress to the secondary and the tertiary university level of education, respectively. These examinations, at one point, came with multiple administrative barriers such as the

requirement of attaining grade reports from Syria (Watkins & Zyck, 2014). Schools used to also require transportation costs and registration fees which, as will be discussed, have been lifted subject to the availability of donor funds. While these requirements have been relaxed over the years, there are still multiple barriers to Syrian children completing post-primary education which this study will report.

A 2018 Human Rights Watch article highlighted several issues preventing Syrian children in Lebanon from enrolling in schools. First, the article highlighted the large deficit in funds stating the Ministry of Education in Lebanon was promised 149 million dollars and were only awarded 100 million dollars to educate refugees (Human Rights Watch, 2018). These strains in funding caused the ministry in October 2018 to state that only children who were previously enrolled in public schools could enroll for the academic year. While many students did not re-enroll, some places were open for newly enrolling students. Yet, the same article also highlighted some schools asking for arbitrary paperwork which were not required by the ministry in efforts to keep Syrian students from entering public schools (Human Rights Watch, 2018). This article highlighted possible discriminatory practices created to prohibit Syrian students from entering Lebanese schools.

1.5 Additional Legal Barriers for Syrian refugees in Lebanon

While the previous section outlined various barriers to education, there are additional legal barriers Syrian refugees face in their host country. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, in 2014, due to the local populations concern with job competition, the Minister of Labor published a law forbidding the employment of non-Lebanese nationals in around 40 different jobs (Annahar, 2014). The Ministry of Labor has implemented protectionist policies since 1964

which required all foreign workers to hold work visas or work permits. In 1995, a law was passed forbidding non-Lebanese from a multitude of jobs which was slightly relaxed in 2005.

One of the articles regarding the legal status of Syrian refugees in Lebanon was published by Aljazeera (Vohra, 2019). This article highlighted the growing crackdown on Syrian workers in Lebanon and the growing number of refugees who do not have residential permits or work permits and are illegally working in Lebanon. This is in response to an April 24, 2019 decision by the Higher Defense Council in Lebanon which allows for the forcible removal of Syrians without work or residency permits who enter the country after April 24. The issue is that work permits, and residence permits are expensive, and it is difficult for many Syrians to prove when they entered the country-leaving them afraid of being deported (Vohra, 2019) . While fees for residency permits were waived in 2016 for individuals who were registered with the UNHCR, this excludes a vast majority of refugees in the country. This is partially due to the Lebanese government's decision to stop UNHCR official registration in 2015. What this means is that many refugees are not registering their marriages or births in Lebanon and these refugees may start refraining from sending their children to school in fear of being deported. This leaves a growing number of refugees at risk of statelessness. Furthermore, a June 2019 decision also imposed large fines on Lebanese who employ Syrians without legal paperwork. An additional 2019 decision required the destruction of all informal refugee areas. This has also forced a number of refugees to go homeless. All in all, there are recent crackdowns in Lebanon with regards to refugees and showing the growing tensions in the country between the refugee and local communities. Additionally, these labor decisions are key policies which will be referred to in this study as it may or may not have altered the refugees' perception of the value of education. While many of these obstacles to education have since been relaxed, as will be discussed

throughout this dissertation, refugees still find numerous obstacles to continuing their studies in Lebanon.

1.6 Efforts to meet challenges in educational provisions for refugees

UN agencies have worked closely with the Ministry of Education to improve the access and quality of education for refugees and Lebanese in the public-school system. First, UN funding was able to cover the cost of education for all Lebanese and refugee children entering Lebanese public schools up until grade nine (Jalbout, 2015). According to the interview of the UNESCO worker, after 2015, secondary school tuition fees were covered by UNESCO. These were all part of the Lebanese Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) strategy. The RACE strategy stemmed from other UN strategies such as the UNHCR's 2014 No Lost Generation Strategy and focused on goals of strengthening the Lebanese national education system so that it could properly tend towards the needs of the local and refugee populations (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2014). This includes plans for renewed infrastructure, teacher training and increasing the capacity and quality of schools for both Lebanese and refugee children. The Norwegian Refugee Council as well as other NGOs have also worked closely with the Lebanese Ministry of Education to provide informal educational opportunities to students who have lost years in their education (Shuayb, et al., 2014)The most common informal opportunity is the Accelerated Learner Program (ALP). This program, implemented by NGOs and supervised by the Center for Education Research and Development (CERD) under the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education, allows students to complete several years of education in a shorter time period through intensive and focused classes (Watkins& Zyck, 2014). Furthermore, in 2019, the Ministry of Education and donor

partners helped put together the National Strategy for Alternative Education Pathways. This strategy focused on the development of regulated alternative education pathways which feed into the formal education system (Ministry of Education and Higher Education Lebanon, 2019). While it is early to see how this policy will be implemented, it shows a shift towards efforts to provide opportunities that will eventually feed into a formal mode of learning.

The private sector has also attempted to participate in the education of Syrian refugees. In 2016, SABIS international school network announced that they will be working with the Clooney Foundation to open schools for Syrian refugees and starting September 2017 implementing the SABIS educational System (Anon., 2016). The estimate was that the first year would allow 5000 students to be educated with this number increasing to 50,000 over the next few years. There has been no published information since 2016 on whether the SABIS schools have been developed and whether these efforts have been successful. The researcher's attempt to contact the Clooney Foundation to inquire more about the progress of the arrangements have been unsuccessful. While the private sector's contribution to the refugee crisis is essential, the SABIS system is quite rigorous and taught completely in English.

The multiple efforts have decreased the number of refugee children not attending school from 80% in 2013 to 50% in 2016 (UNICEF, 2013&UNICEF, 2017). Yet, the numbers are still alarming especially when taking into consideration that 97% of primary school aged children were enrolled in school in Syria before the start of the civil war in 2011 (UNICEF, 2013). The 2018 Vulnerability Report provided additional data regarding the education of refugees (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, 2018). According to the report, 68% of children age 6-14 were in school with only 23% of children age 15-17 in school (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, 2018). Moreover, when the data was analyzed for enrollment in age by grade, the data was that only

11% of children in lower secondary were enrolled in the grade matching their age while 3% of children in upper secondary were enrolled in the grade matching their age. Thus, the 23% of children enrolled in school between the age of 15 and 17 are mostly in classes far below their age. Thus, while the various efforts to provide educational opportunities have shown results, additional insight is required to ensure all children are able to access education.

1.7 Conclusion

This study will first look at the literature concerning the education of refugees and follow with a review of the more specific studies in relation to the education of refugees in Lebanon. An overview of various approaches to education and theoretical insights regarding the purpose of education will also be provided. This will be followed with an overview of the methodology used in this study including the ontological and epistemological perspectives and analytical methods. Chapter four provides an overview of the data collected and findings. Chapter 5 then provides an analysis and interpretation of the data through a discussion linking the data with the research body. This is followed with a series of key policy recommendations. Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation.

Chapter 2

Refugees and Conflict: A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review attempts to unravel and organize the literature surrounding the education of refugees in order to provide a conceptual and theoretical base for the current study. The literature review begins by looking at the history of refugee education across the world and the way the various approaches and policies have developed with time. Next, the different paradigms regarding the purpose of education and then more specifically the education of refugees are discussed. The literature review continues to look more specifically at the literature surrounding the post primary education options for refugees. Because of the complexity of the refugee situation, no one theory properly explains the refugee situation. Thus, the literature review will provide an overview of all theories which may prove to be relevant to the situation. The very complexity of the refugee context suggests that if no one theory can capture that complexity, then a more eclectic approach is required that can illuminate different aspects of the phenomenon (Ball, 1997; Cibulka, 1994; Ozga, 2000; Vidovich , 2001). That said, affinities are drawn between some of the key theorists discussed, Bourdieu and Sen and those that have been inspired by Sen such as Appadurai and Tickley and Barrett as a way of drawing attention to the possibilities of a more integrated theoretical approach to the condition of refugees.

This theoretical eclecticism is interpreted through a Realist lens, rather than a post-modern lens because these theories may contribute to an understanding of one dimension of a complex reality. The chapter then continues to delve further into the literature and information available

regarding the education of Syrian refugees, specifically in Lebanon. The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of the role of education and the purpose of post-primary education for refugees. A review of the literature on Syrian refugee education in Lebanon will also help determine if there are gaps in the literature that this thesis can address. The review will end with a summary of issues and trends in order to provide a rationale for the current dissertation.

2.2 Education in Conflict areas

The field of education in conflict areas arguably falls under the larger umbrella of education in emergencies. This field encompasses a wide range of emergencies ranging from wars to natural disasters. For the sake of this specific thesis, the focus will be on the education of refugees in host countries during times of armed conflict. International attempts to ensure education for refugees date back to World War II. Regardless academic literature in this area was considered in its infancy in 2011 at the time of the onset of the Syrian civil war (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Yet, the field has grown since then with studies covering a range of issues from teacher preparation, curriculum appropriateness, to the issues of refugees in higher education from various contexts (Roxas & Fruja, 2019) (Ramsay & Baker, 2019). Academics are grappling with a multitude of questions surrounding the role and quality of education in conflict and post conflict areas. A majority of the information on the topic has come from field reports from the United Nations and other international agencies but as Sommers stated, "[the academic] literature is too thin and the examples too broad" (Sommers, 2002, p.2). While the literature has increased since 2002, the contexts and examples are increasingly wide, spanning multiple continents and cultures. First, there is a body of literature looking at the effects of war and other

emergencies on the education of children. It was found in various studies and contexts that in general, armed conflict reduces school enrollment due to a multitude of direct and indirect factors including but not limited to the attack on infrastructure, fear of sending kids to school, the loss of teachers and students, the loss of finances to be invested in education, and the loss of returns to education (Coulby & Jones, 2017; Jones & Naylor, 2014). These broad findings are contrasted by specific explanations for them in the literature. For example, it was found that in Burundi, children were not enrolled in school due to poor health (Bundervoet, 2012) while in Tajikistan the enrollment of boys was unaffected, while the enrollment of girls dropped drastically due to fears of sexual abuse on the road to school (Shemyakina, 2006). These instances show the broad spectrum of literature and findings which can be found on the topics of education and conflict.

More specific to this field, and what this thesis will focus on, is the research surrounding the education of refugees in host countries and the various approaches to providing education in that specific situation.

Broadly speaking there have been three consistent normative approaches that have been applied to the field of refugee education: a humanitarian approach, a developmental approach (Burde, 2005) and a human rights approach. These approaches provide a justification for the need for quality education for refugees.

2.2.1 The Humanitarian Approach

The humanitarian approach sees education as an immediate safe space for children. For example, education has been cited as the fourth pillar in response to humanitarian crisis alongside food, water, and shelter (Machel, 2001). This approach led to a focus on psychosocial

development and ensuring children are given the necessary resources to overcome the trauma that came with war. While the humanitarian approach has provided a focus in incorporating education as a form of crisis response requiring immediate action, the protracted nature of conflicts and the increased amount of time spent in countries of first asylum validates the notion that education's purpose could go beyond the immediate need to ease psychological stress or trauma.

2.2.2 The developmental approach

The developmental approach came as an alternative to the humanitarian approach's emergency response to education and approaches education as a necessary long-term investment in order to advance society (Burde, 2005). The approach has been detailed by UNICEF as an approach to education which sees emergencies as an opportunity to transform education systems to be more equitable, student-centered and relevant (Pigozzi, 1999). The developmental approach may be seen in the educational response in Lebanon. For example, the RACE strategy which aimed at improving the state of schools for refugees provided guidance on improving Lebanon's entire educational system including infrastructure, teacher training and the general quality of education.

2.2.3 The human rights approach

The human rights-based approach, was a focus of education by UN and sister organizations who saw education's purpose as to promote "personal development, strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms, enable individuals to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, friendship and tolerance" (UNICEF, 2007). It sees

education as a child's basic right that must be maintained under all circumstances. The human rights approach focuses on the quality of education based on a set of indicators which include the education systems' ability to acknowledge what the learner brings, the necessity for education systems to provide a conducive environment to learning, the importance of enhancing the individual learning processes within the proper context in terms of policies, legislation, resources, outcomes, management and administration (Pigozzi, 2008). While this approach did look at education beyond its value as a remedy for trauma and easing psychological stress, it assumes that individuals should be able to effectively participate in a free society which in itself assumes refugee students, will eventually end up in a place where they are considered equal and free. This assumption is problematic for at least two reasons. First, the average number of years refugees are in exile has increased threefold since the early 1990s (UNHCR, 2016). Second, in most countries, including in Lebanon as we have seen, first asylum refugees are not given equal rights as citizens. Thus, the reality may differ from the normative human rights approach.

2.2.4 Overview of normative approaches

Since this study focuses on the post-primary education of refugees, the question is whether and in what ways these normative approaches are helpful in guiding policy for refugees. The three approaches have originated from UN agencies since the 1990s; with the context of education in emergencies and conflict areas now far more complicated than the 1990s, other approaches may be more useful in guiding education policy on refugees. In this context, the judgement as to the normative injunctions of these approaches in relation to education will be made through the viewpoint of refugees, with additional insights from other theories that will be discussed in the next section.

As has been noted, the literature published in the general area of refugee education reveals a vast variety of findings and contexts. However, the UNHCR data shows that one thing all refugees have in common is that they have less access to education in a host country (50 per cent for refugees vs. 93 per cent non-refugee groups in their own country) ((UNESCO Institute for statistics, 2015)). The reasons for this vary from context to context and include a fear of discrimination, a loss of time in learning the language of the host country and psychological trauma (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). When students do access education, there emerges a second dimension which requires analysis, which is the quality of the education refugees are accessing. As Dryden-Peterson states, most refugee classrooms are entirely teacher centered with sometimes over 70 students in one room (2016). This lack of quality has had dire consequences. For example, in the 1980s the retention rate of Afghan students in Pakistani schools was only around 20% (Retamal, Forthcoming). While the literature has attempted to look at the overall trends in refugee education in a specific context, other researchers have studied refugee education through psychological discourse (Sack, Angell& Rath, 1986; Driver& Beltran, 1998; Roxas, 2011). Rutter (2006) argues against the psychological discourses much research has employed when attempting to understand the microcosm of refugee education. She argues this approach depoliticizes the matter and takes responsibility away from the international and national community hosting these individuals. This dissertation will build on Rutter's studies and look at the specific contexts of the refugees' education not for the sake of solely psychological analysis, but to also look for signs of systematic oppression or policy related issues which may affect the prospective futures of these refugees in order to determine what policy level decisions would most likely bring about reform.

Recently, research has begun to look at the provision of post primary school options for refugees especially with the renewed focus on secondary schooling through updated Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 4) and the UNHCR's mandate calling for the "Provision of post-primary education for all refugees up to the end of secondary school" (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). The focus on different stages of education has shifted continuously in the past few decades. In the 1960s, creating primary education opportunities was given as a responsibility of the local community, and international agencies focused on the provision of secondary school scholarships (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). This model of support for secondary education was quickly shifted as they found the scholarship model, or the model of simply providing monetary funds for students to attend secondary schools, was benefiting only a few in society who were already better off and capable of completing primary education (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Possibly due to financial and resource constraints, instead of repealing and replacing the model of support for post primary education, the shift of focus became only a focus on the primary school phase with the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals, especially goal 2 focusing on the achievement of universal primary achievement. New research has only begun to focus on post primary options for refugees including secondary education, university and vocational pathways.

The current research shows that as of the 2016 data, globally, only 22 per cent of refugees attend secondary school and only 1% of refugees attend university -compared to 84 per cent and 34 per cent of non-refugees respectively (UNHCR, 2016). Although research conducted on the benefits of education for refugees indicated secondary school education decreased child marriages and the number of child soldiers, UNHCR funding for secondary education in 2015 only amounted to 13 per cent of their budget (UNHCR, 2015). Furthermore, a survey on students

in refugee camps in Jordan showed a common barrier to education was that many children did not see education as beneficial to their futures (UNICEF, 2015). Thus, it becomes necessary to further probe into the motives and obstacles around post-primary options for refugees especially in the Lebanese context.

2.3 Education for an uncertain future

This is not the first study to look at the value of education for refugees. A study that has attempted to look at the issue is Michelle Bellino's study of a Kenyan refugee camp where she followed participants from 2015-2017 in order to analyze their aspirations and beliefs regarding post-secondary education and note any changes (Bellino , 2018). What she found was that youth in Kenyan refugee camps highly valued education as they believed it was their way to "become someone" and contribute to the rebuilding of their nation. They saw education as linked to "health and wellbeing, economic returns, elevated social status, good citizenship, enhanced morality, sophistication and modernity, and the potential for spatial mobility" (Bellino , 2018, p. 547). Yet, Bellino saw a disconnect between the aspirations of refugees and the reality where refugees in Kenya were confined to refugee camps, lacked paperwork, and were highly unlikely to complete their tertiary education. Thus, they suffered shame when facing the reality of having to leave schools and do menial labor. While many students refused to take on menial jobs and thus waited for better opportunities, others contemplated illegal immigration. Bellino also stressed Honwana's (2014) concept of waithood and the idea that education prolonged the transition to adulthood. This study, while in Kenya, may reflect similar themes as the study of Syrian refuges potentially shedding light on general issues in refugee education.

2.4 Current Research on Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

A majority of the information surrounding the education of Syrian refugees in Lebanon come from non-governmental agency reports such as UN field reports, government reports or news reports. The academic research body surrounding Syrian refugees is steadily growing with research stemming from various refugee contexts such as those in Germany, UK, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. This research focuses mainly on topics such as the mental health and psychological well-being of refugees as well as the challenges to accessing various levels of education. Nonetheless, Lebanon's prestigious universities such as the American University of Beirut and the French Saint Joseph University have worked alongside government and international organizations to publish a number of research studies on the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

The studies surrounding the education of Syrians in Lebanon include a 2019 overview of the opportunities to access higher education for Syrian refugees in Lebanon (Abu-Amsha, et al., 2019). In this study, a participatory approach was utilized to develop a program which would increase student participation in higher education. This study stressed the importance of hearing refugee voices when creating interventions or understanding barriers. The notion of including refugee voices is also a large component of this dissertation.

Another study focused on Syrian refugees in Lebanon is a large-scale survey conducted by the UNFPA. This study found that a third of the females surveyed between the ages of 20 and 24 had been married before the age of 18, showing a marked increase from the period preceding the Syrian crisis (UNFPA, 2017). This proves highly alarming when other studies have indicated that girls who are married are less likely to continue their education, and girls who continue their

secondary education are less likely to get married below the age of 18 (Jain & Kurz, 2007). In addition, in 2014, an analysis of the situation of Syrian refugee youth in Lebanon was conducted which showed that only 6 per cent were enrolled in school, 41per cent were depressed and hopeless while 78 per cent were unemployed (UNHCR, 2014). The same study looked at the refugees' viewpoints on education where it was found that many refugee youths between the ages of 15 and 18 did want to continue their education in order to increase their job prospects in the future but found finance the primary impeding factor to pursuing their post primary education. This large-scale study employed both data from focus groups and interviews as well as large scale surveys. While this study did have important implications for policy makers with regards to the situation of the refugees in the country, it was conducted in 2013 before the more restrictive policies impeding the work of refugees were passed and before secondary tuition was paid for by UNESCO. The lack of a comparison group also made it possible that the reasons for not pursuing the education could be entirely due to socioeconomic status rather than refugee status. In addition, such a large-scale survey did not disclose what actual options were taken and the reasons behind those options nor did it provide an overview of actual options available in Lebanon. The recommendations provided were also quite limited and lacked detail.

Furthermore, some reports have indicated that an increasing number of Syrian boys are returning to Syria to fight in armies as child soldiers (Steinbuch, 2017). A majority of these studies had no clear indications of the methodology or details of the sampling that was implemented, and why generalizations are possible. Yet, the idea that boys may feel the need to return to Syria to fight in the army may be a post-primary option which could be discussed by the refugees in the interviews.

Another study focused on the well-being of Syrian refugee girls (Dube, et al., 2019). This study asked girls to write a story about a Syrian refugee in order to analyze whether the stories had positive or negative underpinnings. A common theme of these stories was education and the way girls spoke about education. A lack of education was synonymous with negative undertones and education was seen as an area of hope. The stories also reflected several barriers to education such as "fathers who prevented the girls from attending school, from lack of proximity to an appropriate school that matched her education and language levels, and from the girls feeling that they must stop school to work in order to support their families financially or to get married." (Dube, et al., 2019, p. 5). This study is significant in that it shows the perspectives of the refugee youth rather than just professionals despite the fact that the stories are not reflections of reality.

Another highly significant academic study was one also conducted by the American University of Beirut in collaboration with the UNHCR (Al Ghali, et al., 2017). The study sought to determine the opportunities and obstacles for refugees seeking tertiary education by interviewing key individuals. The study interviewed eight refugee students in university and eight refugees from aid organizations throughout Lebanon. This study did put together a list of college scholarships for refugees and found four common themes of barriers to tertiary education: financial barriers, academic barriers, lack of academic and career counselling, and legal documents (Al Ghali, et al., 2017). Yet, it did not mention any possible alterative pathways Syrian students may pursue as a response to those barriers.

Most recently, a 2019 study by the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education looked at the post-primary options for Syrian and Palestinian

refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. The study summarizes four findings regarding the challenges with regards to the access to secondary, technical and vocational and tertiary education. This study is significant as it looks at multiple options for post-primary education rather than assuming tertiary education is the only option. The data collection method focused primarily on the perceptions of sixty key professionals working in ministries or with NGOs and scholarship providers in Lebanon as depicted through interviews and focus groups. No Syrian refugees were interviewed as part of this study. Nonetheless, the study found that funding has been primarily focused on primary schools, and consequently, large gaps exist in access to secondary schools, vocational options lack data and quality interventions, and higher education lacks relevance to the labor market (El-Ghali, et al., 2019).

Again, another study looked at the barriers Syrians faced in accessing universities in Lebanon (Papa & Al-Abdullah, 2019). First, this study claimed that many Syrians did want to continue their tertiary education in Lebanon rather than in Syria due to challenges in funding and finding professors in Syria. Second, the study interviewed Syrian college students and concluded that they face barriers in terms of languages, finances from the private universities, and attaining the required documents such as police clearances required to continue studying in the public university.

Several non-academic studies have been conducted especially by news agencies. One such study was conducted in 2018 by Al-Fanar Media on the barriers between Syrian refugees, not necessarily those in Lebanon, and higher advanced degrees (Wheeler & Rasha , 2018). These studies used online surveys sent to students within Syria and supplemented the information with in-depth interviews to draw several conclusions. However, the academic validity of the methodologies is questionable due to several factors. First, since they are not academic articles,

the details of the methodology are only faintly alluded to rather than rigorously supported. Second, the data was collected through online surveys and in-depth interviews whose validity, reliability and the logic of sampling were not discussed. Thus, it is possible the sample selected was not representative of the situation. Nonetheless, the broad results are worth noting as an indication of the situation. First, they found that students faced challenges with completing expensive entrance requirements such as the IELTS which costs $205, more than the average income for a refugee (Wheeler & Rasha , 2018). There were challenges that in Syria the quality of teaching was decreasing with professors leaving the country. Additionally, with the shutting of the British Council and other organizations, there were less opportunities to learn or strengthen English which is essential for students who want to study abroad. They also noted a decrease in practical experiences such as those in laboratories due to the decrease of the purchasing power of the Syrian pound and the difficulty of accessing internet within the country. These may also contribute to some of the reasons that the Syrian refugees in Lebanon may not be able to join tertiary education in Syria.

In summary, while there have been various studies regarding the educational options and barriers to education for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, there have been no studies which have used a triangulation of data from refugees, internet, and professional interviews in the Lebanese context to determine the challenges, options and perceptions on education. As Chapter three will detail, the literature has informed the design of the study.

2.5 Theoretical frameworks explain the nature of education

One of the research questions is focused on refugee youths' perceptions of the purpose of education. While the literature review has focused, thus far, on research conducted relevant to

the education of refugees in Lebanon, additional insight regarding the theoretical purpose of education for refugees is required. It is important to note that this study will not assume a certain purpose of education and thus this section of the literature review discusses theories that provide descriptions or explanations that may help to make sense of the data in this study. They may also guide future policy in the light of the findings of this research.

2.5.1 Human Capital Theory

We start with Human Capital Theory (HCT) because one of the reasons refugee students may value education is because it offers the route to gaining a job. HCT places the value of education on how it can be invested in the labor market for quantifiable economic returns for the worker and the economy (Becker, 1964). As Foucault (2008) noted it was from Becker's view of HCT, that some of the key doctrines of neo-liberalism were derived. While education's ability to produce job opportunities which may ultimately translate into increased income, is an undeniably important aspect of secondary and higher education, other theorists have criticized this theoretical framework claiming education's effects are overstated (Levin & Kelley, 1994). Levin and Kelley continue to explain that "complementary inputs that determine the effectiveness of education are largely ignored by policymakers" (p. 97). These complementary inputs include the actual job opportunities that exist after the completion of education. According to their argument, if the complementary inputs are not present, education cannot maximize an individuals' potential alone. With a majority of refugees in Lebanon reliant on international aid for basic survival, it is simple to focus on the role of education in increasing financial independence without looking at additional complementary inputs (Said et. al, 2016).

There are more theoretical and empirical criticisms to human capital theory in the literature (Tan, 2014). For example, theoretically HCT has been linked with rational choice theory assuming individuals act and choose to invest in education as rational beings (Fevre, et al., 1999). Rational choice theory has been dispelled as humans do not necessarily act as rational beings due to bounded rationality, bounded willpower, and bounded self-interest (Zafirovski, 2016). Empirically, there are studies which have actually shown that an increase in education levels do not translate into increasing economic gains in the form of productivity for certain countries nor increased wages for individuals especially when wage data is disaggregated (Lauder, et al., 2018). In Lebanon, it has been found that the educated youth actually have higher unemployment rates than those who are illiterate with the educated youth taking as much time to find their first jobs as those who are uneducated (Kawar & Tzannatos, 2012). Nonetheless, unemployment for Lebanese with higher education degrees ranges around 8.8%, and it has been found that those with higher education degrees earn on average more than those with lower education levels (Abdul Hamied, et al., 2017). Thus, while the relationship is loose, there is a link between education and better job prospects for the Lebanese. There is no such data on the link between education and job prospects for refugees in Lebanon.

As previously mentioned in the introductory chapter, in the context of Lebanon, some policies at the national level may prevent the maximization of the human capital potential especially for refugees. Most refugees work in low skilled and informal jobs accepting low salaries with an unemployment rate of 30 per cent (Berti, 2015). The study therefore has the potential to see whether or not such policies have affected the job aspirations of refugees.

Additional criticisms to human capital theory claim there are sociological reasons behind why individuals choose to pursue education rather than solely economic reasons (Fevre, et al.,

1999). Fevre et. al and other critics of human capital theory claim that some of these sociological reasons vary from social class to social class. As Lauder et. al (1992), claim social class and gender are large predictors of educational choice.

2.5.2 Bourdieu's theory

Critical theorists are concerned with the way education may be promoting the stratification of social classes rather than promoting equality (Bourdieu & Moishe, 1993). Bourdieu claims that education systems benefits those with what he calls cultural capital and the habitus of the dominant class in society (Bourdieu, 1977). Cultural capital is a non-financial capital such as the knowledge of the ways of acting, dressing or speaking related to the dominant class. In other words, those who embody class in, for example, reflecting the language abilities, appearance, or knowledge of the professional middle class are more likely to have cultural capital to succeed. Habitus is the social psychological link or hinge between the class structure and the dispositions of individuals which reflect the internal tendencies, reactions and preferences of members of the dominant class. It is the way individuals internalize the forms of thinking, feeling and acting which are consistent with their class. Those who additionally have the habitus acquired from their homes are more likely to succeed.

In addition, Bourdieu discusses how the different capitals, he defines, create a sociological 'field' bound by rules and stakes: those symbolic and material 'trophies' that actors in the field compete for. The elite class in the field of power are those individuals who can further create rules and stakes to ensure the continuation of their positions. These rules are often internalized by all agents as part of their habitus (Hilgers & Mangez, 2014). Rajani Naidoo discusses Bourdieu's concept of field applied to the context of higher education where she explains that Bourdieu

claims that higher education institutes increase societal inequalities since those dominant in the field make decisions on who has the desired academic capital which in turn equates to cultural capital (Naidoo, 2004). Thus, those making admission decisions will try to accept those who have the dominant agents' capital and habitus under the guise of academic neutrality. As we shall see, the concept of field can be understood as a form of national exclusion when applied to Syrians who have to follow the Lebanese education system.

Links are made below between Bourdieu's theory and those of Sen, Appardurai and Tickley and Barrett in order to begin to develop a more comprehensive and consistent theoretical account of the situation of refugees.

Bourdieu's theory of educational reproduction has been criticized as being highly contextualized to western cultures and overly focused on the realities of public-school systems in western countries, making it somewhat difficult to apply in other areas (Collins, 1971, pp. ; Sullivan, 2002). While Bourdieu's work has been criticized, it has caused a shift in paradigm in how we understand the relationship between education and social class inequality. This has allowed educators to be more critically reflective about the role of education in reproducing inequality. It can be applied in the refugee context, when we understand the way the rules and stakes in the field of education exclude refugees.

2.5.3 Sen's Capabilities theory

One emerging theory which has been used to support education for poverty reduction is the capabilities theory first discussed by Amartya Sen (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). This theory or approach was developed in contrast to the basic needs' theory or approach to development which viewed it as a way to ensure human beings were guaranteed their basic needs such as food, water

or shelter (Streeten, 1981). The basic needs approach to development was criticized for several reasons including the notion that human beings required more than just basic needs to thrive (Streeten, 1981). Amartya Sen believed development efforts should ensure human beings have the means and capability to make choices that they have reason to value. Here Sen emphasizes that it is the capacity to utilize resources in various functionings which was the true indicator of justice or what he calls wellbeing freedom (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). When applied to education, several important points are highlighted. First, this approach to education differs from human capital theory in that it is less focused on the economic return of education but rather education's role in expanding the individuals' capability of attaining a life they value and in expanding their freedoms (Sen, 1999). The capabilities approach sees education as a means of expanding an individual's capacity to aspire and achieve those choices. Sen also focuses on the concept of capabilities as sets with only certain functionings possible simultaneously depending on social preferences and circumstances.

However, it should be stressed that Sen's approach is not individualistic, he explicitly takes into account context. This approach allows the possibility of affinities between Bourdieu and Sen. Gasper (1997) has argued that Sen's view of capability has two dimensions: an S dimension and an O dimension:

'Analytically, however, one may suggest that the space of capacities, skills, abilities, and attitude may form the realm of 'S-capabilities' (with 'S' meaning 'skill' and 'substantive') (see Gasper 1997) which is empirically related to a particular and socially, culturally, politically and economically constrained set of life-paths which is (potentially) attainable to a given person. This socially structured set of attainable life-paths constitutes the realm of 'O-capabilities' (with 'O' meaning 'option' and 'opportunity').' (Gasper 2002)

Otto and Ziegler (2006) argue that Gasper's analysis is not far from Bourdieu's account of cultural capital which presupposes social structures:

'While on the surface some similarities might be discernible, in particular 'S-capabilities' should not be conflated with the contemporarily popular notion of 'human capital' (Becker 1993; Schultz 1963) the notion of 'S-capabilities' may have some kinship with Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural capital. Typically, 'human capital' refers to 'investments' in personals skills and competences in order to produce a return that ideal typically should lead to benefits for both, individual welfare as well as the productivity of the economic system. As Sen (1999, 295) points out, 'human capital', relating "to broadening the account of 'productive resources' […] concentrates on only one part of the picture [. … I]'

Whereas, in contrast, Sen explicitly recognises that education should be understood more broadly and within specific social structural contexts. Otto and Zeigler (2006) note:

Analytically the capability approach highlights the personal, social, economic, cultural and institutional factors giving individuals the opportunity to do and to be (or not to do and not to be) what they consider valuable (or invaluable) for their fulfilment. As Ruth Levitas (2004, 616) puts it: "Valued capabilities, as well as capabilities themselves, are always socially produced. Since desires, capabilities and capacities are social in their origin as well as their development, it follows that in any human society, the free development of each and the free development of all will be subject to social determination at every stage". This comes close to what Bourdieu used to call "generative capacities of dispositions, […which] are acquired, socially constituted" (Bourdieu 1990, 12).

Yet, an issue with the capabilities approach is that it assumes a neutral environment where the only differences are differences in resources or capabilities and thus education plays a more critical role (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). One assumption of the theory is that under the law all individuals are bound by the same policies and live by the same rules- this is simply not true in the world of refugees. Moreover, as we have seen in Lebanon, even if refugees had an education that enabled them to make choices that they have reason to value, they may not be able to enact their choices.

Tickley and Barrett (2009) address the assumption that the law and the rules of the society are neutral between groups. They do this by incorporating Nancy Fraser's concept of social justice. In order to understand Tickly and Barrett's view, it is necessary to elucidate Fraser's social justice framework. Here she outlines three prerequisites for social justice: redistribution of resources, recognition of the claims of all marginalized groups of society, and the active participation of all marginalized groups in the decision making processes (Fraser, 1996). As mentioned previously, Sen's capabilities approach focuses on education as giving children the capability to choose a multitude of future prospects, according to what they have reason to value. Tickley and Barrett combine the notion that education expands the capability of an individual with Nancy Fraser's concept of social justice. For them, individuals must have access to resources, recognition and decision making abilities to provide an approach to education which looks at education as expanding students' capabilities in a socially just matter, this implies taking into account the question of laws and in whose interests they are made. This requires all marginalized groups to be given equal access to quality educational resources while participating in the decision-making process (Tickly & Barrett, 2009). The issue with looking at educational quality by its ability to expand students' capabilities is that there are multiple policy

level barriers which refugees face hindering their access to a socially just education system and post schooling option. Thus, Tickly and Barrett's approach goes beyond the assumption that merely providing education will, of itself, expand a students' capability. The quality of education can only be determined by its usefulness in a socially just society. The question in this study is whether young refugees have any hope that the choices that they seek to make will eventuate.

2.5.4 Appadurai's theory

Appadurai (2004) is an Indian-American social scientist who studied the poor in Mumbai and built upon Amartya Sen's capabilities approach to development and the economy. Appadurai's aspirations' theory claims the poor have a lesser capacity to aspire and realize aspirations which may be directly responsible for their continuous dire conditions. Appadurai claims aspiration is not merely the ability to aspire and have wishful thinking, but it is the ability to navigate between aspiration and reality. He sees aspirations as a capacity that is a site of "interplay between agency and social structures" (Archer, DeWitt & Wong, 2013, p. 59). In viewing aspiration as having to be negotiated between agency and structure, the affinity to Bourdieu's theory, as well as that of Sen's, can be seen. He argues that if the poor were given the tools and means to aspire, they would have more of a capacity to go beyond the social class they were born into. To clarify, Appadurai claims the factors affecting the poor's lack of a culture of aspiration are due to the lack of opportunities, lack of voice to partake in policy changing activities and the mere social structures preventing the access of the poor to essential information and goods furthering the rift between rich and poor (Appadurai, 2004). Saito (2003) and other researchers (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007) have later applied Appadurai's approach or theory in the field of education. Yet, Appadurai's claims are based on a society where individuals were all equal under the law and the applicability on the refugee situation is questionable.

2.5.6 Psychological theories: Maslow's theory and human agency

The previous theories assume individuals make choices bound by the constraints of societal structures. Refugees, for example, have to weigh their options and make decisions based on various priorities and the constraints of a legal and social system. Other theories look at these choices more at an individual level within the constraints of psychology; for example Bandura (2001) focuses his research on the individual's agency to make decisions with an inherent benefit on the individual after observing model behavior within society. The theory focuses on human agency where individuals will make the conscious decisions to pursue actions if and when they see inherent benefit in the action (Bandura, 2001).

Maslow (1943) provides an additional psychological theory which could also help explain the motivation behind the choices that refugees make. Maslow published his psychological theory on human motivation where he explained his theory on the hierarchy of needs explaining humans must realize the first of five steps detailed in Figure 2 below before striving to realize the next (Maslow, 1943).

Figure 2Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943)

There have been a multitude of adaptations, criticisms and reconsiderations of Maslow's hierarchy of needs in various fields including education and business. Wahba and Bridwell (1976) found that research does not support the notion of a rigid hierarchy of needs. Others determined Maslow's theory was highly ethnocentric and not encompassing non-western and capitalistic societies (Bouzenita & Boulanouar, 2016). One study discussed how spirituality was missing from the hierarchy which is an essential component especially in highly religious Islamic societies (Bouzenita & Boulanouar, 2016). Another study discussed the hierarchy of needs during wartime and peacetime and found that during times of war the safety of the family may carry equal importance to the safety of the individual (Tang, 1998). There were multiple studies which tried to reconceptualize Maslow's theory and narrow the five levels into two or three levels (Alderfer, 1972) & (Herzberg, 1987). Despite these criticisms, it can be argued that a psychology like that of Maslow's may help us illuminate elements of the agency that Syrian refugees may have.

This dissertation will not adapt a pre-ordained theoretical framework and make a claim regarding the purpose of education for refugees in advance of the data. Instead, it will attempt to

understand the purpose of education from the viewpoint of the refugees. For this reason, the theories outlined above may illuminate their views and point to explanations for them.

2.6 Issues and Trends

This section will discuss the trends in the literature and conclude with a discussion on the gaps in it which enable this thesis to make a claim to providing a contribution to knowledge.

There are various themes that emerged from the literature. First, it has confirmed that there are undoubtedly barriers keeping refugees from continuing their education. These barriers described earlier include issues with legal documentation, financial barriers, academic barriers in terms of language, and a lack of academic and career counselling. The literature also found that the Syrians did value education although there were conflicting studies on this issue. The study in the Za'atari camp in Jordan showed that the Syrians did not find value in education as refugees and thus did not pursue their education further (UNICEF, 2015). Other studies found that refugees viewed education positively (Dube, et al., 2019) while some studies found that refugees wanted to continue their education, but finances were the primary barriers (UNHCR, 2014).

As a summary, the literature has uncovered that refugees are far less likely to continue their education, despite the fact that research has indicated that there are multiple benefits to ensuring post-primary education for refugees such as reducing child marriage, reducing the recruitment of child soldiers and reducing the exploitation of youth (UNHCR, 2015). Second, there are three general normative approaches that guide the provision of education to refugees in emergency situations: the human rights approach, the humanitarian approach and the

developmental approach However, in practice, there seems to be very little support for the provision of secondary or the tertiary stage of education for refugees in a protracted environment. These theories have been developed in societies where all individuals are, in principle, equal under the law or where that possibility is envisaged. This indicates a gap in the theories regarding the nature of education for refugees, as in many circumstances refugees are not subject to the same rights as citizens. In this literature review I have identified those theories that may illuminate aspects of the lived conditions of refugees. Fourth, there is very little systematic research regarding Syrian refugees' education in Lebanon which looks at the perspective of the refugees as well as the realities of opportunities present. In general, there is an academic research gap which leaves the need of providing additional theories to support the education of refugee youth and to describe the opportunities and obstacles refugees face when navigating through their young adult lives.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As the literature review has indicated, there is a lack of robust academic research surrounding the education of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In particular, there is a lack of information regarding the post-primary school options for Syrian refugees and research into the perceptions of Syrian refugees regarding those options. Thus, this thesis proposes to address several distinct research questions in order to unveil the options and barriers to post-primary education as perceived by Syrian refugees in Lebanon and professionals in the field. The questions are the following:

1. What are the post primary options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon from various perspectives including policy makers and young refugees?
2. What are the barriers from various perspectives including the refugees' perspectives with regards to succeeding in the post-primary school option they would like to choose?
3. When the views of young refugees are compared with their Lebanese counterparts, do they share the same choices or are there differences in the views regarding the purpose of education and their post primary school options.

This chapter will detail the methodology that guides an answer to these research questions. This includes an overview of the ontological and epistemological perspectives, a detail of the research strategy, the methods of data collection and the reasoning behind those

methods, a description of the methods of analysis as well as an overview of the sample selected including the sample selection process. This is followed by a discussion of all ethical considerations.

3.2 Ontological and epistemological perspectives

As a researcher, it is important to have a clear ontological and epistemological perspective (Bryman, 2015). The ontological perspective of a study refers to one's view of reality (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988) while the epistemological perspective is the relationship between the researcher and reality (Carson, et al., 2001). This study adopted a realist methodology detailed by Bhaskar (1989) and Haig and Evers (2016) and elaborated by other researchers such as Maxwell (2012). Bhaskar (1999) claims reality can be separated into three strata: the empirical which is the observed, the actual which is our interpretation of the data and the real which is the explanation of the causes. Key to Bhaskar's ontology is that it is through the 'real' or through structures like those relating to Patriarchy or social class that causation is identified. So, if for example, we want to know why women typically earn less than men, then we are encouraged to look at Patriarchal structures to identify the causal mechanisms involved, as per figure 3 below and focus on the realization of these mechanisms in order to better understand reality.

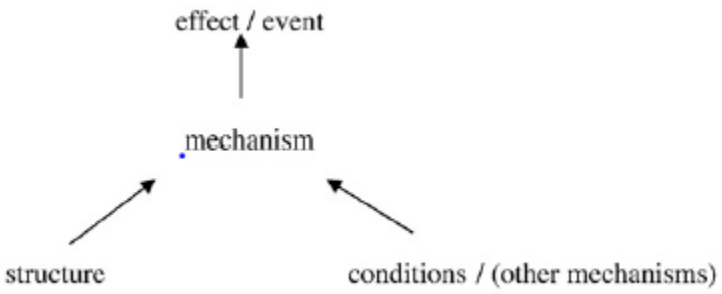

Figure 3: Critical realist view of causation (Kowalcyk & Sayer, 2000)

Critical realism is also in opposition to the classical positivist approach which assumes that the world comprises only observable truths which proper scientific methods can help unveil (Haig & Evers, 2016). The positivist approach is the polar opposite of social constructivism or the constructivist paradigm which refutes the existence of any reality and claims reality is subject to the perception of the individual researcher (Andrews, 2012). Maxwell (2012) defines critical realism as "ontological realism plus epistemological constructivism" (p. 11). Thus, critical realists stress the importance of, language, emotions and beliefs as essential parts of reality (Maxwell, 2012). However, from a Realist perspective the important aim is to explain why people hold the multiple views that they often do in relation to the same phenomenon.

It was argued in Chapter 2 that any single theory there would not be able to capture the complexity of the refugee situation. In this respect, it could be argued that an eclectic approach would enable aspects of their situation to be illuminated. However, it can be argued that such an approach can be consistent with a realist methodology because there is an agreed phenomenon which is the condition of refugees that requires investigation. This view is consistent with realism in the following respects: (1) the ontology underlying the circumstances of refugees may well be varied as Bhaskar suggests. We have an empirical understanding of some of the constraints that limit refugee choices, with respect for example to the law. But we do not necessarily understand the generative mechanisms that produce the views of young refugees or the range of inequalities that they are subject to. (2) The theories used to identify these causal mechanisms may vary. However, we can expect that they will share a common conflict approach to questions of inequality (Lauder, Brown, Dillabough and Halsey, 2006). This is because we do not, as yet have an overarching theory which can identify all the causal mechanisms within its

framework. There have been proposals as to how this could be undertaken using an interdisciplinary approach (Danermark, 2019) but at the moment, we need to remain with a form of theoretical eclecticism.

Thus, in summary the study will employ a realist perspective that will be supported by the collection of multiple sources of data in order to triangulate information to have a more complete understanding of the underlying causes of the refugee phenomena.

3.3 Research strategy

This section provides an overview of the data collection and analysis tools selected for this study as well as the reasons behind the selection of those tools. As Jacobsen and Landau (2003) state in their research into refugee populations, many researchers are faced with what they call a 'dual imperative' requiring their work to be both relevant and academically sound. They argue that much research into refugee education lacks the academic and methodological rigor required to be academically viable. One of the recommendations they state is to ensure the methodology in refugee education is detailed and supported. In order to ensure methodological rigor, the below section details the methodology or research strategy adapted in this dissertation. The concept of relevance is discussed in chapter 5 with the policy recommendations.

This dissertation is conducted using primarily qualitative data analysis methods. As mentioned earlier, the study attempts to answer three distinct questions: what are the actual post primary options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, what are the Syrian refugees' perceptions regarding education and their options post primary school, and what are the barriers from various perspectives including the refugees' perspectives with regards to reaching post-primary school

options. In line with the critical realist paradigm, there is no God's eye view of a situation and multiple points of view are required to completely understand a phenomenon. Thus, data is collected from three different perspectives: the refugees' perspective, the professionals' perspective and the internet's perspective. Data collection is conducted using a combination of content analysis from electronic information, questionnaire data and interview data. However, where possible critical realists will seek theories that can explain this range of phenomena.

First, in order to answer the question of what the post primary options are for refugee students, an electronic information and electronic document analysis was conducted with a thorough internet search of the programs and scholarships available for Syrian children once they have finished their ninth-grade year. The methodology can be interpreted as an online content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019). Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid analysis of written content. In this situation, the written content was available published on websites. There are various advantages and disadvantages to this type of data collection method. While the world wide web can provide a comprehensive list of information advertised regarding scholarships or opportunities for Syrian refugees, information provided online can change over time. Thus, it is recommended to set a time frame of when the data was collected and to clearly indicate what words were used for the internet search (Krippendorff, 2019). The search was conducted to include information from December 2018-June 2019. The data collection was done by a Google search in both English and Arabic using the keywords and phrases of "scholarships for refugees in Lebanon", "secondary school options for refugees Lebanon", "NGO education refugees Lebanon" and "vocational programs refugees Lebanon". Only findings with opportunities for Syrian refugees were included. This excluded a significant number of findings which had opportunities specific to Palestinian refugees. The webpages mentioning the details of

each of the opportunities were saved in order to ensure static data. The content of each webpage was coded with various categories emerging. These categories were summarized in an excel sheet which allowed for the classification of the post primary opportunities as either secondary school scholarships, undergraduate scholarships, graduate scholarships, free informal education options, or others. Additional information was collated such as entry criteria or qualifying factors for scholarships or schools, who could qualify for the program or opportunity and possible impeding factors.

To gather information which may not be present online, questionnaires were sent out to representatives at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon including teachers and school administrative staff, individuals in NGOs such as the Norwegian Refugee Fund who work play an essential role in improving the access to education for refugees, education specialists who work at the UNHCR and individuals at top research institutes in Lebanon such as the American University of Beirut. The questionnaire asked if there are any opportunities for Syrian refugee children after the ninth grade, what those opportunities were and to what extent children were taking advantage of those opportunities and why they may or may not be fully taking advantage of the opportunities. One of the aims of this was to ensure that all post primary school options were outlined. One to two individuals in each of the mentioned organizations received an emailed questionnaire. These were then followed up with to ensure at least one individual from each NGO or organization replied. Further probing occurred with individuals who had thorough questionnaires which indicated additional information. Four professionals in the field had follow up questions sent by email or were invited for a follow-up interview. These questionnaires as well as the follow up interviews were analyzed using content analysis in order

to come up with additional themes regarding possible barriers to education and to add to the comprehensive list of all educational opportunities for refugee children post ninth grade.

The second question looked at the obstacles and options from the perspective of the refugees themselves as opposed to the perspective of professionals. This was a method of methodological triangulation where more than one type of data is collected regarding a particular phenomenon for the sake of increasing validity and reliability of data (Bush, 2012). The perspective of professionals only gives one version of the real landscape for refugees, and the triangulation would allow for a more complete account of the options for refugees and possible barriers which may not be considered by the refugees. Eight interviews were conducted on Syrian refugees. These included interviews with two girls between the ages of 13 and 15 and two boys around the ages of 13 and 15 and two girls around the age of 19 and two boys around the age of 19. These specific age groups were selected in order to try to get the perspectives of two different generations of Syrian refugees. The first group are those who may have arrived in Lebanon around the age of 10-12 and who have had to make choices which helped them become the young adults they are now or those who arrived in Lebanon as young adults looking for opportunities. The second group are those of children who have arrived in Lebanon as younger children but are now around the age of 13 and are approaching the age where they will be required to make choices after primary school. Both genders were interviewed from each age group in order to analyze any differences between the choices and options of female and male students. These interviews were semi-structured with broad questions that helped get a sense of whether or not they are continuing studying currently and why, and what their hopes and dreams are for the future. For contextual purposes, the socioeconomic backgrounds of these individuals were indirectly described through questions asking about their parents' occupation and whether

they were required to work to support their family. Appendix A has a list of the guiding questions which were used in this study. Also, the interviews were conducted in Arabic and recorded. The researcher translated and transcribed those interviews from spoken Arabic to written English. The ethical implications and details on the data collection methods are discussed in the next section.

The third part of this study consisted of interviews of what can be considered as a comparison group. These were the Lebanese youth around the same age group as their refugee counterparts living in the same Matn region. As Jacobsen and Landau (2003)recommend, comparison groups allow for a better analysis of the phenomena to help determine if the phenomena which is being analyzed is a direct result of the refugee status of the children or of other economic or age-related factors. These Lebanese children were asked the same guiding questions as the Syrian refugees and the data analysis was conducted in the exact same way. Interviews were likewise conducted in Arabic or English according to the preference of the interviewee and the researcher translated and transcribed those interviews into English before analysis.

The use of a comparison group does not eliminate the possibility of differences in the perception of education being attributed to differences between the Lebanese and Syrian cultures, or differences in religious sects or upbringing. But, it is assumed the comparison group will help control for various factors since the location, age group, schools and general socioeconomic situation of the Lebanese and Syrians. This will help identify whether different perspectives on education could be attributed to the differing policies governing Syrians and Lebanese. The data from the group of Lebanese youth who are not refugees is used as a

comparison of the data from the refugee children using an adapted version of grounded theory which is discussed in the data analysis section.

There have been articles that have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of interviews especially in relation to those who are under stress. For example, (Breunius, 2011) discusses in detail the use of interviews during times of conflict or post conflict. Here she mentions that interviews provide personal insight into important situations which may not be documented elsewhere, but she stresses the need to plan research questions in advance and be wary of the issue of bias and reliability. She mentions the need to ask the important question of "who is willing to be interviewed – and why?" (p. 135). In the current research, there was for example one individual who refused to be interviewed: this was a highly pregnant fourteen-year-old girl who was out of school. This indicates that the younger children who were interviewed were children already in school and who had an interest in continuing their education. These were not girls married off at a young age or asked to stop their education. This may affect the results and show the refugees all prioritizing education over marriage which is clearly not always a fact.

Breunius (2011) also mentions other disadvantages of interviewing such as the prevalence of over researched topics which cause interviewees who have been asked the same questions multiple times to answer in a way to simply appease the interviewer. There is also the risk of alternative motives for answering questions such as the desire of financial incentives which causes interviewees to rush to complete an interview and finish answers. With these in mind, it is worth noting that the refugees questioned claimed they had never participated in an interview beforehand, and they were not informed of any financial incentive until they were finished with the interviews. Rubin and Rubin (2005) focus on the need to ensure credible

sources. That is, the researcher must ensure the right people are asked the right questions. Thus, the individuals selected for the refugee interviews had to be individuals who went to Lebanon after the war as refugees and not those who have lived in Lebanon for a long time prior to the war and merely registered as refugees for the sake of benefits.

3.4 Data Analysis of Online Search

The analysis of the online search for post-primary options for refugees was conducted using an adapted method of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019). As mentioned, the online search employed a relevance or purposive sampling technique which calls for the selection of texts which include only a relevant sample. According to Krippendorff (2019), in order to counter the fact that information online could be changing, the search should be narrowed to a certain time frame with relevant key words used for the search. The pages or articles advertising post-primary school opportunities were saved in a file to ensure an analysis of a static document. In order to ensure the information advertised was valid, all advertisements not from official UN or educational outlets were verified by finding the main source of each advertisement and ensuring it came from a registered NGO, governmental, or educational website. Information on the websites were coded, and an excel sheet was created which collated the various codes. All of the opportunities described online were scholarships for refugees. Thus, an excel sheet collated information on the various codes which included the type of scholarship, the factors the scholarship covers such as tuition fees and/or housing expenses, the language of instruction of the institute providing the scholarship and the criteria to qualify for the scholarship. An analysis was done by calculating simple percent of frequencies of, for example, the frequency of scholarships for non-Arabic speaking institutes. This use of quantitative data allowed for one

viewpoint regarding the reality of the scholarships that are available and the possible barriers and frequency of barriers.

3.5 Data Analysis of Questionnaire

The questionnaires sent to professionals was an attempt to collate the various options, opportunities and scholarships which the online search may not have been able to uncover. It also aimed to uncover barriers from the perspective of professionals in the field. The multiple-choice answers of the questionnaire were analyzed through quantitative analysis of frequencies while the open-ended questions and follow-up probing were analyzed using content analysis and by coding the various answers and categorizing these codes to determine themes. The barriers from the perspective of professionals were also taken into consideration in the final analysis and development of conclusions.

3.6 Data Analysis of Interviews

In order to analyze the interviews with the Syrian refugees and Lebanese youth, a realist version of grounded theory (Glaser and Straus, 1967) was implemented. This model calls for a systematic analysis of data in order to detect phenomena and formulate theory (Haig, 2005). This adapted version of grounded theory is in line with Haig's (2005)realist approach to grounded theory known as the Abductive Theory of Method (ATOM). Unlike grounded theory which assumes a blank slate or mind, this theory proposes an approach allowing for a rigorous analysis of phenomena in order to develop theories based on presuppositions that is natural for the researcher to have in mind. It falls in line with a critical realism as it calls for both an understanding of the data at the individual level to understand the social constructs of the

information as is common with interview data, and it combines these multiple narratives which may point to an overarching theory.

The analysis begins with a transcription of all interviews translated from spoken Arabic in the Syrian or Lebanese dialect into written English by the researcher. The process of transcription or the transformation of spoken conversation into text has been discussed and criticized in the literature. First, transcription has been described as a selective process as the researcher must select what aspects are worth noting such as tone, pauses, facial expressions etc. (Ochs, 1979). On the other hand, the process of translation with or of transcription only further complicates the data risking cultural insensitivity and misinterpretations (Moerman, 1996). Since the researcher is the individual translating the interviews, this does reduce the prospect of misinterpretations due to poor translation, but there remains a risk of the Lebanese-Syrian dialect causing translations to be skewed.

In order to analyze the data, all refugee youth interviews were transcribed and analyzed as a group, and important phrases or quotes were highlighted. As per the recommendations of Braun and Clarke (2006) the data was read once through in its entirety. Common themes and recurrent ideas were noted. The next phase was the initial coding. In this stage, important sections of text were analyzed for recurrent ideas and labels were attached (King, 2004). The third stage was the combination of important codes to come up with concepts or themes. These themes then helped detect phenomena or come up with generalizations. According to (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000) "A theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole" (p. 362). The same process of coding and determining themes was done likewise for the Lebanese youth interviewed. The Lebanese

themes were used as a comparison group with the refugee groups to determine what themes may be direct results of refugee status. In addition, these themes were compared with themes that may have emerged from the internet search and questionnaires. The themes that arise from these groups of interviews are described in detail in the results chapter. These helped the researcher deduce theories that could give a holistic explanation to the perception of the role of secondary and higher education in Lebanon for Syrian refugees.

3.7 Sample Selection for interviews

Palys (2008) argues for purposive sampling of participants for interviews where the participants in the study are selected for the sake of understanding the research question: in this study the post-primary situation for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Thus, for the sake of this study, a Syrian refugee was defined as any Syrian individual who came into Lebanon after the onset of the Syrian civil war and was either legally registered as a refugee or otherwise. The purpose of the sampling is to determine whether the sudden move from a home country to a host country due to war had effects on educational prospects. Thus, the families who have resided in Lebanon before the Syrian civil war, whether or not they were registered as refugees, were not included for the purpose of this study. The rationale was that children of these refugees were already familiar with the Lebanese system and may have not faced the same traumas or challenges as those who had to flee their country suddenly. The refugee children selected for interviews were chosen from the Meten district of Mount Lebanon. The areas selected were largely Druze villages where refugee families are renting homes within these villages and have net monthly incomes above the average Syrian refugee in Lebanon (Masri & Srour, 2014). While this area has been selected for convenience purposes-the researcher has a home in the Meten area and

neighbors who are refugees- the sample will allow for a view of what the "better-off" refugee is experiencing in the country to eliminate the view that the dire consequences are "only" for those less wealthy refugees in informal camps. Since the sample size is too small to come up with generalizations regarding all individuals in the Meten district, a description of the economic contexts of the individuals interviewed took place including questions on the economic backgrounds of the parents. The sample purposefully consisted of male and female youth in order to uncover the gender differences in society and how or if the two genders may view education differently. The Syrians to be interviewed were found mainly through a combination of convenience sampling and a snowballing technique. The first person approached was an 18-year-old male who was a student of a teacher who is an acquaintance of the researcher. This person was told to bring some friends who may meet the inclusion criteria. He introduced the researcher to three other Syrian refugees who had called on one another to meet the researcher: these were two fourteen-year-old girls and one fourteen-year-old boy. The four refugees were interviewed on the spot and given a small token of appreciation- $5. They were not told that they would be given anything for the interview. The other refugees interviewed were randomly approached in the village and asked permission to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted in private between only the researcher and each individual participant separately. Only one Syrian refugee who was approached refused to be interviewed after consultation with her mother. She was a 14-year-old girl who was recently married and heavily pregnant. One additional refugee was not included in the study. This refugee was registered by UNHCR as a refugee in Lebanon although her and her family have resided, studied and worked in Lebanon far before the war. This was a significant finding in itself as some individuals surveyed or given benefits for refugees may not be comparable to those who have fled as a direct result of the war.

All other refugees approached agreed to be interviewed. These interviews were conducted late 2018, after the government determined that refugees would not be allowed to be employed in jobs where Lebanese were available, but before the crackdown on refugees in the workplace occurred in 2019.

In addition, the Lebanese youth selected for interviews were chosen from the same area as the Syrian refugees. These were volunteers who were of a comparable economic background as the Syrian children. The youth were all living in the same village and have lived there throughout their childhood. They were interviewed based on the same guiding questions as the refugee youth in order to act as a comparison group for the Syrian refugee interviews. These individuals were selected as well through both a convenience and snowball sampling technique where individuals who the researcher is aware fit the inclusion criteria were interviewed and those individuals were asked to refer other names. The Lebanese volunteers were not given any monetary gift for answering the interview questions.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research is more subject to criticisms regarding the rigor of its research design than its quantitative counterpart. Thus, the concept of validity and reliability become more pressing. Validity is defined as "the quality of being well-grounded, sound, or correct (Merriam Webster, 2020). There are two types of validity generally discussed in the literature: internal validity or how likely the participants relate to the findings or how likely the study repeated would produce the same results and external validity or how likely the findings can be extrapolated to differing contexts (Denscombe, 2010). Reliability, on the other hand, has in the past been considered as synonymous to a research design conducted in a manner that is

reproducible (Golafshani, 2003). Since the concepts of reliability and validity stem from quantitative paradigms, some researchers have argued against the use of these concepts to describe qualitative research (Winter, 2000). This may hold some worth in that the qualitative research design especially in the case of this dissertation is focused on the nuances of a specific group and external validity cannot be the primary purpose (Ambert, et al., 1995). Despite this, it is a common assumption that reliability and transferability remain essential and there exist various strategies that can be implemented to increase the rigor of qualitative research (Cypress , 2017). This section will provide an overview on the techniques implemented to ensure validity.

The critical realist approach describes validity quite contrary to the descriptions of positivists or constructivists. Positivists usually claim quantitative methods are ideal in all situations while constructivists are partial to qualitative research methods in all situations. In contrast, critical realists view the validity of a topic based on the relationship between the research question and the research methods selected (Maxwell, 1992). Thus, when the research question asks about the perspectives of refugees, a qualitative approach in the form of interview data is ideal to unpack the thoughts and expressions due to a phenomena and specific contexts which give life to that phenomena. Yet, when the research question asks what the available options for refugees are, a questionnaire is more appropriate as the aim is to create a thorough list of all of the available options. This allows the researcher to use qualitative data to identify causal mechanisms which can then be tested and explained against quantitative research.

In addition, methodological triangulation, the use of multiple sources of data for the purpose of abduction, completeness and confirmation, is a method used in this study (Downward & Mearman, 2006). Retroduction, also known as abductive reasoning, is a form of reasoning that seeks to produce explanations for observable phenomena by the use of theory and using data

from other sources (Downward & Mearman, 2006). This is in line with a critical realist approach to research. Since critical realists believe there are multiple perspectives to a phenomenon and different positions may perceive reality differently, the multiple sources of data can help provide a more complete outlook (Maxwell, 1992).The critical realists attempt to explain the multiple perspectives or the range of phenomenon through developing explanatory theories.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Due to the sensitive nature and topic of the interviews, all adult participants in this study were required to sign informed consent forms. The younger children had to sign the informed consent forms, but they were additionally required to get their parents' signatures in addition in order to get consent to allow their children to participate in the interviews. These consent forms were written in Arabic by an independent translator. Since the researcher has the capacity to read Arabic, the accuracy of the translations was verified. The consent form gave an overview of the purpose of the research and how the data would be anonymized and used. It informed participants that the interviews were voluntary, and they could stop the interview at any time or contact the researcher to withdraw their answers. The researcher's contact information was shared with the participants on the ethics forms and the refugees were told they could write down or take pictures of the contact information to keep in their records. During the analysis and writing of this report, all names have been changed as well as any obviously identifying factors. No individual was required to answer or continue speaking on any topic he or she was not comfortable with, and this was made clear in writing on the consent forms and verbally throughout the interview process. The questions had triggered the discussion of difficult circumstances in the person's life, and distress is a risk which the researcher was well aware of

and mentioned in the academic body (Breunius, 2011) . Any signs of distress as described by Breunius from the questioning process such as hesitation or crying, the interviewee giving unneeded details about traumatic events, the researcher losing control of the interview and the way the answers are steered would have caused a cessation of the interview process. There were no instances where this occurred with only one interview slightly getting off track. During this one instance, the researcher was able to steer the interview back into the direction of education by strategically following up with questions which focused on the educational aspect of the information shared. Furthermore, the researcher was the person to translate and transcribe the interviews, and no other individuals had access to full transcriptions although relevant excerpts of the interviews have been included in the report. Data protection is of utmost importance due to the possibility that sensitive information may be shared with the interviewer regarding income and occupations as well as possible child labor or issues with the interviewee's legal status in the country. Some information may show signs of illegal work or illegal stays within the country, and it is important all participant information is diligently protected.

Positionality is an important concept especially during refugee research (Ryan, 2015). As a Lebanese adult interviewing Syrian children, many children may have felt that I was an outsider and part of the people causing them oppression while in Lebanon. Furthermore, when they knew I was a doctoral student, they could have tried to show a non-genuine augmented appreciation for education or have me hear what they believe I would have wanted to hear. Further outsider status may be due to the fact that I am female and older males may find this uncomfortable when they speak to me about why they did not continue their education-potentially considered a confession of weakness. Thus, it is essential that, ethically, these children can choose to have their parents or other individuals with them while answering my

questions and are fully aware of the confidentiality of the study. There were no participants who chose to have their parents present. I made sure that participants understood that I did not believe education was the only option, and I wanted to hear their genuine views. I was extremely careful not to make it seem like education was the only acceptable plan for their future, and I made sure they knew that they will not be judged for any of their answers. My positionality can also affect how I interpret my data, and it must be stressed that I am fully aware of the implications of my positionality. I have taken a conscious effort to interpret data for what is written rather than what I hope should be written.

Chapter 4

Description of Data and Findings

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of all collected data for the purpose of this study. First, there will be an overview of the refugee participants in the study followed by a summary of each individual refugee's story. While the information shared regarding each participant may seem overly detailed and more in line with a narrative approach, the details are included in order to understand the context behind each person. This will ensure the information from the interviews are seen as coming from individuals in order to avoid over generalizations. An overview of the findings from the interviews with the Lebanese will then be discussed followed by a short summary regarding the Lebanese interviewees. In the following section, the data from the internet search regarding refugee post primary options will be discussed. An overview of the findings from the surveys sent to professionals in the field of refugee education will also follow. The next section in the chapter will discuss the themes that emerged from the data as a whole with a comparison between the interviews of the Lebanese and those of the refugees.

4.1 Data from the Online Search for Post-Primary Opportunities for Refugees

An online search was conducted in Arabic and English to look at possible post-primary options, scholarships or opportunities for Syrian refugees in Lebanon as of July 21, 2019. The data was compiled into static documents and analyzed using a content analysis. This allowed for the creation of a list of all communicated online opportunities and scholarships. An additional detailed scholarship list collated the analyzed categories or themes regarding each of these

scholarships including the educational level the scholarship would cover, whether the scholarship is for all refugees around the globe or specifically Syrian refugees, whether the language of instruction at the scholarship institute is Arabic or not, and whether the scholarship covers partial tuition fees or full tuition fees and includes living and other expenses. Additionally, details of entry criteria were documented. These were all common themes for any scholarship and the collation of this information allowed for further determinants of themes that emerged from the data.

Only 34 scholarships for post-primary educational opportunities were communicated online. One scholarship was for year 11 and 12 refugee students interested in travelling and studying in an IB school outside of Lebanon. Another scholarship was for an online certificate that would allow high school aged students entry into partner universities in Lebanon, and the rest were for undergraduate or graduate admissions or post-secondary certificates in Lebanon and abroad. Table three below summarizes information regarding the education level covered by these scholarships.

Table 1: Types and number of post-primary scholarships advertised online

Type of Scholarship	**Number**	**Percent**
High school	1	3%
Post-secondary Certificate or Diploma	6	18%
Secondary Certificate or Diploma equivalent	1	3%
Undergraduate scholarship	10	29%
Graduate scholarship	13	38%
Any Level	2	5.88%
Vocational and Undergraduate	1	3.1%

4.2 Challenges to accessing scholarships

There were many possible impediments for students to even qualify for the above scholarship programs. For example, 12 of the 34 scholarships (35%) did not provide any sort of living expenses. This would be especially difficult for refugees who are required to work and study to cover their basic costs of living. Only ten of the scholarships (29%) allowed for refugees to study in Lebanon rather than travel abroad, one was a grant to study anywhere in Lebanon or abroad, and four of the scholarships were for online studies. This left 65% of the scholarships requiring students to relocate to a new country. Even if living expenses had been paid for, this would still hinder many from working and providing for their families.

The analysis of these scholarships demonstrated various potential barriers. First, the online degrees and diplomas, while convenient for students who are not able to leave the country, hold the risk of not being accredited and causing students to study for a non-recognized degree. This is due to the fact that online degrees, diplomas and certificates in Lebanon are not recognized (El-Amine, 2017). In addition, the scholarships requiring refugees to leave the country to study abroad can prove to be an impediment for refugees who need to work while studying to not only cover their own living expense but to financially support family members. As was evident in the interviews, for ladies, the support for family members may be physical care and household support rather than only financial support which would also make studying abroad difficult. An additional impediment for the scholarships in Lebanon was the fact that 7 of the 11 scholarships required students to have valid residency permits or be registered with the UNHCR as refugees. The four remaining scholarships were for grants to any institutes and allowed for any student to apply with Syrian IDs.

Furthermore, the scholarships were limited in number. Where indicated, the scholarships were awarded to a range of two to forty high achieving refugee students. 27 of the 34 (79%) scholarships were open to all refugees including Palestinians, Somalians, Sudanese either located in Lebanon or located around the world. Of the remaining seven scholarships, only three were open to specifically Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. The remaining four were open to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Syria or Jordan and sometimes even included Lebanese citizens. These limited numbers made the scholarships highly competitive. For example, the Hope Scholarship provided by AMIDEAST at one point was awarded to only a few students who were at the top 5% of their class with excellent English proficiency. AL Ghurair Foundation scholarships are also targeted towards only the highest achieving refugees below the age of 30. It is also worth mentioning that of the international scholarships, there was only one scholarship which allowed Syrian refugees access to US universities. Due to visa impediments for refugees into the US, the Hope scholarship has been suspended indefinitely (May 2019). As of 2017, the AL Ghurair STEM scholarship was also suspended due to a lack of funding

All of the higher education institutes where scholarships were awarded were institutes that had a medium of instruction other than Arabic: mainly English with two institutes offering Turkish universities. As mentioned before, this can be especially difficult for Syrian students who are accustomed to studying in Arabic.

4.4 Data from Surveys

Surveys were sent to professionals who had experience in supporting the education of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. These were selected in various ways. First, researchers who had published on the topic of refugees were sent emails with a short explanation of the aims of the

study and the link to the survey which they could complete anonymously. An internet search was conducted regarding NGOs working on the education of refugees and individuals whose emails were online were contacted with the same description and survey link. When an individual responded to the email, he or she was asked to forward the link to colleagues who may have relevant information. In addition, the researcher directly contacted individuals she knew as acquaintances who worked with refugees. Again, these individuals would forward the survey link to other colleagues.

A total of 30 individuals were sent the link to the online survey. There was a total of three professionals who responded to the emails saying they did not feel they had the necessary knowledge to effectively respond despite the fact that they had worked on projects directly related to the education Syrian refugees. Twenty individuals did not respond, while seven individuals replied to the link when they had finished and promised to forward the link to other colleagues. There was a total of thirteen respondents to the survey regarding the views of options for Syrian refugees after primary school from the perspective of professionals. The individuals surveyed included five individuals from various NGOs, two university researchers in Lebanon, one individual working in the Ministry of Schools, one individual with experience in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon working on Syrian refugee initiatives, three individuals working as education specialists with the United Nations (UNHCR and UNICEF), and one individual who works with UNESCO. Three of the survey respondents were asked additional questions verbally or by email to supplement their answers: the government school administrator and one manager of an NGO.

The surveys showed that five of the thirteen respondents felt the almost all refugees were not taking advantage of the opportunities that they had while two individuals felt that half are

taking advantage of the opportunities, four felt most are not taking advantage of the opportunities that were available, and two felt most were taking advantage of the opportunities. There was no link between the positions or where the individuals worked and their answer on this question. For example, of the six individuals who worked at NGOs and answered the survey, two stated that they are mostly taking advantage of the opportunities, three said they are almost all not taking advantage of the opportunities and one said most are not taking advantage of the opportunities. This shows a range of answers with all respondents believing there were opportunities for refugees and a majority of respondents, nine out of thirteen, believing refugees had opportunities which they were not taking advantage of. The next question was an open-ended question for those who did not believe refugees were taking advantage of the opportunities they had asking why they were not taking advantage of the opportunities. The responses ranged between one and six sentences and included the following main ideas: work obligations, finances, marriage, family obligations, transportation, language barriers, barriers to receiving official documents from Syria, racism from teachers, lack of parental interest in education, lack of technologies, overcapacity in schools, low quality of schools, lack of accreditation of available options, lack of knowledge of opportunities, and not putting education as a priority. The table in Appendix A details the various answers from the survey question regarding reasons for Syrians not taking advantage of the opportunities as well as their frequency or the number of times they were seen in the surveys.

All of the respondents were given an opportunity to write any additional comments regarding the refugees and education. Only five of the thirteen individuals left a comment. Two of the respondents mentioned that the number of refugees accessing secondary or higher education was reported at 2%, and they both believed the number was exaggerated. One

respondent, an individual who conducts educational research at a university in Lebanon, mentioned the challenges on the Ministry of Education stating the following:

“The pressure on the MOE is great, and the delivery is much below expectations. Part of the reason is that the MOE in Lebanon has always been underperforming, bogged down with endemic problems such as huge number of "contracted" teachers, frequent changes of cabinet ministers of education, each bringing with him his own "advisors", diminishing of the position of the next most important person (Director General)in the MOE who is the one person who continues from one MOE to another, thus disrupting and redirecting policies pursued before”.

The fourth individual worked as a consultant with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education attempting to implement various technological reforms. He believed technology would be the only way to educate the vast number of refugees in a cost-effective manner. He mentioned that the numbers of students out of school are so high and the cost of employing teachers would be just as high and cause a risk to quality assurance. This individual strongly believed that online courses would be the only way to ensure refugee students had access to what they required. In his own words:

“Because of the massive and differing needs of these students, a normal school environment would not be able to provide the level of customization needed yielding suboptimal learning experiences and benefits. An asynchronic learning model, can adapt to the myriad of needs while providing scale at unprecedented cost structure”

This individual stated that there were initiatives to provide this to the Ministry of Education in Lebanon, but politics and a lack of organization within the ministry kept this from becoming a reality.

The last individual who worked with an NGO believed the international NGOs are supporting many initiatives for higher education. This individual believed the barrier was getting students to pass grade nine due to a difficult curriculum and language barriers.

4.3 Further probing after surveys

Three of the survey respondents were contacted for the purpose of further probing. These individuals had written out detailed answers in their surveys which highlighted the wealth of their knowledge and their potential for further questioning. For example, one of the surveys mentioned the ITELAF diploma which was one completely new point of information not found in other surveys or online. The other individual mentioned details regarding the change of policies from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon and the implementation of those policies in schools. The third respondent mentioned in detail the changes regarding the UNESCO aid policies which included changes in policies which allowed for the tuition fees of secondary schools for refugees to be covered. The fact that tuition fees were covered until 12th grade was also new information not initially found in the literature review. The first of those respondents was one of the managers of an educational NGO in the Beqaa valley, the second respondent was one of the administrators at the public schools in Mount Lebanon while the third was a specialist who worked on prost-primary educational options with UNESCO. The director of the NGO and the UNESCO specialist were asked follow-up questions via email and the school administrator was asked questions in person. The respondents to the follow-up questions were informed that their answers would be included as part of the research project and would remain completely anonymous. The respondents by email confirmed that they agreed that the information they provide will be for the purpose of this research, and the school

administrator signed an informed consent form regarding her answers which were voice recorded then transcribed from Arabic into English by the researcher.

The manager of the NGO was asked to elaborate on the choices the Syrian refugees make after primary school. He was asked to elaborate on the issues with the ITELAF certification, where he explained that it was a Baccalaureate exam which is affiliated with the Syrian interim government in Turkey. He mentioned that this certificate was not accredited by any government other than the Turkish government and a handful of others excluding Lebanon. He wrote about many students wasting their time and efforts in these programs to only receive no accreditation. The manager reported that many students tried to study with charity Syrian schools to sit for the Syrian official exams. While these certificates were accredited, the schools were only open to a handful of students in the Beqaa region with one private school charging a fee of $400 a student. This also had an added risk of requiring students to travel to Syria for their Baccalaureate exams.

The school administrator was asked to elaborate on the continuous changes in the admissions policies for accepting students into the public schools in Lebanon. She supplemented her answers with hard copy circulars sent from the ministry to schools. These circulars were not analyzed in detail for the purpose of this study, but the fact of their existence is noted. She mentioned that when the Syrians first came to Lebanon, the public schools were told to accept all Syrians with or without official documents to support their parents' claim of what grade level they were enrolled in back in Syria. This translated into a multitude of issues in the classroom. According to the administrator, "teachers were teaching science in English to nine-year-olds in fourth grade who did not know how to write a sentence in English, and the Lebanese students were disadvantaged because the level of the whole class was dropping and the teachers were obliged to teach in Arabic when they were meant to be teaching in English". After multiple

complaints, the next year the school had the discretion to accept students based on school capacities. They could accept as many Syrians as the school could hold. According to the administrator, this was very vague, and some schools tried to tell the Syrians that they were over capacity when they were not because the Lebanese were complaining that the culture of the classroom was too Syrian. She mentioned that this was portrayed well in 2015, when a satirical show on Lebanese television highlighted this common concern by showing a Lebanese child coming home from school speaking with a Syrian accent. The administrator explained that the year after the ministry set a maximum percentile of Syrians each school could not exceed. For the early years (Kindergarten), Syrians could not exceed 20% of the students, and for the primary school years, they could not exceed 50% of the students in each grade level. In 2015, the students who did not find places in the first three years of the war, were provided with a government operated afternoon shift school. As of 2019, the administrator claimed that schools still have a set quota for Syrians that varies from year to year. She claims that although it is not a written rule, only Lebanese are allowed to register with the school until the last ten days before the closing of registration. It is during that ten-day window that Syrian parents are permitted to register their children on a first come first serve basis. The administrator continued to explain that in order to register in schools, whether in the afternoons or during the day, refugees must provide a health vaccination card, a national identification document from Syria, and documents from the students' previous schools to prove which grade the student should be placed in. Students with gaps in their education or a lack of documents go to Non-Formal Schooling and then return when they have demonstrated they are capable to continue in their target grade level. Students who are not able to find places in traditional day-time schools are told to register in afternoon shift schools, although many parents opt to keep their kids' home until the following

year due to location constraints. In order to register for the official exams, the student must also have the same documents as well as pay a small fee of 25,000 L.L (about $17). For secondary schools, students must have a Brevet diploma as well as a legal residency permit in addition to the health card, and national identification document. The issue, according to the administrator, is getting students to reach the point of registering in secondary schools because many cannot pass the Brevet exam.

The third individual who was asked follow-up questions was the education specialist who worked for UNESCO. She mentioned that the secondary school fees were covered for all refugees by UNESCO. There were challenges with regards to ensuring funding, and she mentioned that transportation was not funded for secondary school. She did stress that the lack of funding was a constant fear for UN and NGO agencies. When asked about the policy making process, the specialist described how policies were developed in the Ministry in Lebanon. She stated,

"Since the start of the crisis, the Ministry has been very active in leading to the response. Along with education partners and donors, MEHE developed the RACE plan (Reaching all children with education), which has been jointly developed by MEHE and its partners. Main donors and UN agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR and UNESCO) are members of the RACE Executive Steering Committee and work together to ensure the quality of education for all refugees and vulnerable Lebanese in Lebanon".

The education specialist was also the person who provided the 2019 National Policy for Alternative Education Pathways mentioned in the introduction.

The probing after the surveys provided additional insight which helped provide further information regarding the complexities of the situation.

4.4 Summary of opportunities for refugees post primary school

There were several options post-primary for refugees according to the online search, interviews with professionals and the literature. These were secondary education in a private Lebanese school, secondary education in a government Lebanese school, Lebanese vocational schools, apprenticeships, returning to Syria to study, returning to Syria to serve in the Syrian army, menial labor or early marriage for mainly female youth. A table in Chapter 5 will detail all possible options post-primary school for refugees as well as the possible barriers. The scholarships available attempted to bridge the barriers to the educational opportunities, but as the data shows there were multiple obstacles to even accessing these scholarships. Those obstacles include language barriers as most scholarships are to institutes not in Arabic, a lack of proper financial support with scholarships not offering living expenses in addition to the lack of job opportunities when students graduate. Most importantly, there was a large gap in the availability of secondary and vocational school options with almost all scholarships focused on higher education.

4.5 Overview of refugee participants

As mentioned, there were a total of eight Syrian refugees interviewed. Table 1 below summarizes names, ages, grade levels completed in Lebanon and whether or not each of the participants were in school as of the time of the interviews.

Table 2: Overview of Syrian refugee interviewees

Participant name	Gender	Age	Grade level completed in Lebanon	In school
Sami	Male	14 years	8th grade	Yes
Yousef	Male	14 years	7th grade	Yes
Ahmad	Male	19 years	8th grade	Yes
Jad	Male	19 years	None	No
Mariam	Female	15 years	7th grade	Yes
Fatima	Female	13 years	5th grade	Yes
Rania	Female	19 years	None	No
Dana	Female	19 years	None	No

The following section summarizes each participants' response where each participant contemplates the various or lack of educational options he or she perceives for himself or herself.

4.5.1 Sami

Sami is a 14-year-old boy who was interviewed the summer after his 8th grade year. He had been in Lebanon for seven years- ever since his family relocated to Lebanon shortly after air strikes started falling on their village. Prior to the war, Sami's father used to take building contracts to prepare walls with cement and paint. In Lebanon, he has continued with his trade but working as an unofficial worker with a Lebanese contractor doing similar projects. Back in Syria, Schools were closed due to the violence, and his family had people they knew in Lebanon. Thus, they decided to join those family friends until the war ended. At that time, they assumed they would stay in Lebanon for a couple of weeks. When the family determined it was unsafe to continue in Syria anytime in the near future, Sami started his education in a public school in Lebanon. He was seven years old at the time he started studying in Lebanon. He was placed in second grade

based on his age although he did not have any supporting documents from his school in Syria. He said he had some hardships when it came to learning English as he had never been exposed to the language in Syria. The school decided to place his brother, who was a year older than him, in his class dropping his brother from third grade to second grade. They told the boys that this was to allow the both of them to motivate one another. During the interview, Sami mentioned that he had finally passed his eighth-grade year after repeating the year for the second time. He was excited to embark on his journey into secondary education the next year where he aspired to become a civil engineer and help rebuild his broken country when the war subsides. In addition to his studies, Sami works in a grocery store throughout the summer and helps his father pay rent and meet the costs of living in Lebanon.

4.5.2 Yousef

Yousef is a 14-year-old boy who had just successfully finished 8th grade and was going to 9th grade. He had been in Lebanon for eight years-since the onset of the Syrian Civil war. His father used to work in Lebanon in a plant nursery and send his family money while Yousef and his brother including his younger siblings used to live in their owned apartment and study in Syria. When the war started, they decided to move to Lebanon and live with their father. According to Yousef, he is an excellent student and is doing very well in school. He joined school in first grade right when the war started, and his father was adamant about him not stopping school at all. While he struggled the first year in year 1 due to the change in languages, his father invested in private tutors for him and his sister. Yousef still thought it was easier for him to continue in the first grade because he was joining the Lebanese system younger than some of his other friends. Yousef's father runs several small businesses and has many connections in Lebanon; thus, he is more well-off compared to other Syrians. Despite this, Yousef plans to continue his

higher education in Syria where he dreams about becoming an interior architect or computer engineer.

4.5.3 Ahmad

Ahmad is a 19-year-old boy who was interviewed the summer after his 9th grade year. He had been in Lebanon for seven years-since the start of the war. In Syria, Ahmad used to live in their owned phone while his father used to have his own business where he would prepare stones for stone hedging contractors. When they came to Lebanon, his father ended up simply working to assist Lebanese builders. He had just failed the first attempt at the Brevet examinations and was planning to re-sit the exam during the second offerings. Ahmad attended an afternoon shift school up until 8th grade. For 9th grade, he had to go to a morning shift school. This still allowed him time to study and work to pay for his education and expenditures. Ahmad lost quite a bit of schooling before continuing his education in Lebanon. First, he assumed the war would end in a matter of months, so when he arrived in Lebanon he did not enroll in school. Since he had completed 6th grade in Syria, he was devastated to know that he would be held back three grades and would be placed in the third grade due to his lack of knowledge of English. He finally decided to continue his studies and during the interviews he expressed his motivation for completing his Brevet exams.

Being 19 years old, Ahmad faced challenges his younger peers had yet to experience. He explained how if he were to go to Syria he would be taken to national service for the Syrian army. To Ahmad, this was a death sentence; he was certain they would place him on the front lines to fight and die, but he wanted to return to Syria, despite the war for the sake of his education. Thus, the Brevet exams were Ahmad's legal ticket back into Syria without undertaking national service. He could then prove to the government that he had been studying

abroad, and he would be able to return to Syria to complete his year 12 exams. If he were to be successful, Ahmad talked about wanting to continue higher education in Syria. If he will not be able to get an Army service pardon, he discussed trying to pursue his education in a vocational school in Lebanon as it is cheaper and easier to pass. If he cannot afford it, he knows the reality is he would have to quit education all together and work to make ends meet.

4.5.4 Jad

Jad was working in a male barber shop in mount Lebanon when approached for the interview. He was 19 years old and had been in Lebanon for almost six years when he came with his family after the bombings in his village caused his home to be destroyed. Jad's father used to come to Lebanon periodically for work where he used to work on farmland in Syria and sell vegetables to the Lebanese market, so he knew where they could resettle for what they expected would be a few months until the war was over. When they returned to Lebanon, Jad's father continued to work with Lebanese on farmland. Jad had not studied in any school in Lebanon since he left his country. This was due to various reasons. He had finished 8th grade in Syria where he considered himself a good student. When he came to Lebanon, he stayed home for a year assuming the war would end soon. When his family realized the war would be continuing, they went to the local school to register for a seat. There, the school offered him a place in the first grade due to his lack of English knowledge. He was fourteen, and Jad claims they wanted to place him in a class with little children. He decided then to wait the war out some more. In the beginning, his father had no intentions for him to work, but finances started diminishing and Jad was getting depressed from boredom. He told his father he was ready to find a job and decided to learn how to be a male barber with a friend from the village. While he does regret not having the

opportunity to continue his education, Jad is grateful he has learned a vocation which he plans to continue back in Syria when the war ends.

4.5.5 Mariam

Mariam is a 15-year-old girl who was interviewed the summer after 7th grade. Mariam moved to Lebanon six years prior to the interview with her family. Back in Syria, Mariam's father used to work in stone hedging getting his own contracts for villas and buildings. When they moved to Lebanon, Mariam's father ended up working in the garden of the Lebanese family where they rent a room although her father tries to find stone hedging jobs whenever possible. She struggled to pass her subject classes at first because she was out of school for a year, and she was studying everything in English for the first time. In 6th grade, she had to repeat a year due to the difficulty of learning everything in English. Yet, she did not give up and according to her, with perseverance and a love for education, she has been able to make it to the 8th grade where she studies in an afternoon shift school. Mariam dreams about being an international lawyer fighting for human rights. Thus, one could determine that Mariam was quite ambitious. While she did not give much detail, she mentioned that she had seen a lot of people suffer with no rights, and she strongly believed every human deserved justice. Mariam believes she will continue studying in Lebanon until the war ends-an ending Mariam thinks will come sooner rather than later. If the war were not to end, she is still certain she will find a way to reach her goals and continue her education due to the support of her father and family. Mariam does not work, but she helps her mother in the home with the cooking and cleaning and tending towards her younger siblings. She does have younger brothers who assist her father with making money for the family.

4.5.6 Fatima

Fatima is a 13-year-old girl who has been in Lebanon since 2012. She spoke in a lower volume and struggled to make eye contact with the researcher. After a few questions, she gained more confidence and answered with more detail. Fatima explained that her mother used to work as a teacher in Syria and her father used to work as a builder taking on projects where he focused on creating walls. Her mother lost her job when the war began, and her father's work had stopped. She had just finished the fifth grade when the interview took place. Fatima took a year off school when she first came to Lebanon. When her parents realized the war would continue longer than they had anticipated, they signed her up for the only school in their near vicinity that was willing to accept Syrian applicants. This was a government school with French as the medium of instruction. Fatima had studied grades one and two in Syria and had to repeat the first grade due to her having absolutely no knowledge of French. She claims that she was young, and she has learned the language well and is progressing with her studies. She hopes to continue to pursue her education and get a brevet diploma which she knows is difficult in itself. Fatima dreams about being a doctor. She hopes and is confident that she will be able to return to Syria to go to medical school as she does see difficulty with having to stay in Lebanon and study since she is unsure of how long refugees will be supported in Lebanon and whether she would be able to afford university in Lebanon. Her first ambition is to continue to university although she knows that she may reach a point where she will just have to "maintain her peace." When asked to elaborate on this phrase, she mentioned that it is the priority of her family to make sure they are living in peace in Lebanon without conflict.

4.5.7 Rania

Rania was a young 19-year-old unmarried lady working in a pastry shop in the village. She had been in Lebanon for only two years where they fled under gunfire to Lebanon once the situation in their village had got to a point where they could no longer stay safe in their own homes. Rania was a 12th grade student in Syria when she fled the war with her brother and father and came to live with family in Lebanon. Her father returned to Syria to continue his employment with a sugar mill, and she now lives with her brother and his wife. Rania has no documentation, diploma or official degree to prove that she has reached 12th grade. The school she used to study at no longer exists. Thus, she sees continuing her education in Lebanon to be unaffordable and too difficult. This is further complicated by her weak English language skills which are required in schools and universities in Lebanon. She did explain that prior to the war she dreamt of becoming a teacher to help "secure her future". During the time of the interview, she did not see the feasibility of her ever returning to continue her higher education. She already worked long hours during the day to help support her family, and she feels even if the war were to end, which she feels is unlikely, she would be too old to continue to pursue higher education.

4.5.8 Dana

Dana was a 20-year-old lady who had been out of school for quite some time. She left Syria when she was thirteen years old after finishing only the sixth grade. Shortly after the start of the war, her father who used to be the only income in the family working as a police officer, was killed in a bombing in their village and their home was burned to the ground, Dana fled under harsh conditions to Lebanon where they moved in with family already working and residing in the Mount Lebanon area. Dana mentions a very difficult period taking care of her mother who has severe diabetes and no other family to support her. She mentions the difficulty of dealing

with the situation, stating, “we were mentally too depressed to think about school”. Dana also mentioned additional challenges such as how her family would not have been able to financially cover her school and how people in the schools told her she was not allowed to register in Lebanon. Dana is quite pessimistic about ever completing her education although she does hope the war in Syria would end, and she could return to Syria to be reunited with her friends and family.

4.6 Data from Lebanese Interviews

There was a total of eight Lebanese youth interviewed during this study. These consisted of similar participants in terms of ages and gender as the Syrian refugee participants. A majority of the Lebanese participants studied in public schools with a few having studied in private schools and incurring the economic weight of the tuition fees. The schools were all in the same region of Lebanon and the youth in private schools were asked questions such as parental occupations in order to help ensure a comparable socioeconomic background as the refugee youth interviewed. Table 2 below summarizes some of the data of the Lebanese interviewees such as the gender, age grade level completed, and whether the interviewee was in school or not.

Table 3: Overview of Lebanese interviewees

Interviewee name	Gender	Age	Grade level completed in Lebanon	In school
Lana	Female	14 years	8th grade	Yes
Rami	Male	14 years	7th grade (failed the year)	No
Omar	Male	14 years	8th grade	No

Ghassan	Male	20 years	Completed 12th grade	No
Hiba	Female	20 years	Second year university	Yes
Ryan	Male	20 years	Second year university	Yes
Yara	Female	14 years	Brevet	Yes
Jessie	Female	18 years	First year university	Yes

4.6.1 Lana

Lana is a 14-year-old Lebanese girl attending a public school in Lebanon. Her mother is a teacher, and her brother helps harvest pine nuts. She had just finished 8th grade and would be entering 9th grade to sit for her Brevet exams. Lana was very nervous about the workload, but she was confident that she would pass her exams if she studied properly. When asked about her future and her educational goals, Lana mentioned wanting to study Biology in Paris to later work in a laboratory. She did say that in reality living expenses in France may be too high, and she accepted that she would most likely have to complete her studies in Lebanon. Regardless, she hoped that when she did finish her studies, she would go to France to find a job. When Lana was asked about any possible barriers to completing her education, she only mentioned the barrier would be her motivation to work hard and study.

4.6.2 Rami

Rami is a 14-year-old boy working in a female hair salon in Mount Lebanon. Both his mother and father work just so the family can make ends meet, his mother works as a janitor and his father works in manual labor to dig wells in the village He struggled academically in the public

school he studied at in mount Lebanon, and after failing sixth grade once then seventh grade, he decided to drop out of school all together. He started working at a female salon in Mount Lebanon where he dreams about opening his own salon when he is older. He has a plan to get his official vocational certification as a makeup artist and hair designer and travel to the GCC to save money in order to manage his own salon in Lebanon.

4.6.3 Omar

Omar is also a 14-year-old boy working in a female salon-the same salon as Rami. His father owned a small shop in the village, and his mother did not work. He had recently dropped out of public school when he failed his eighth-grade year. He always dreamt about being an artist, and he felt the academics in his school did not allow him to pursue his talents. When he had to repeat his eighth-grade year, he dropped his academic program and found employment in a female hair salon in his village. He has plans to continue his vocational education and be a certified hair designer. He then hopes to travel to the GCC to be able to come back to Lebanon and open his own salon.

4.6.4 Ghassan

Ghassan is a 20-year-old Lebanese boy from Mount Lebanon. He successfully finished his Baccalaureate high school examinations his first try without ever having to repeat a year, but he decided he did not want to pursue his higher education because he could not see the benefit of studying in a country where job prospects were bleak. He explained that in Lebanon any job needed a “wasta” or a referral from someone high ranking in society. He especially did not care for his education because he did not care to live abroad. He started off working in stone cladding with a relative of his, but then decided to work with another relative in his start-up chicken farming business. He is currently supervising a group of employees. Ghassan is unsure about his

future, and he claimed he would like to take life one day at a time. When he was asked about where he wants to be in 5 years, he was unable to give an answer, and he stated that the country is so corrupt that he does not see the point of thinking about a future. He has not given up on his education completely, but he feels he has the same options whether he completes his degree or not.

4.6.5 Ryan

Ryan is a second-year graphic design student at a university in rural Lebanon. He studies full time but works all summer to help his family pay for expenditures throughout the academic year. Ryan studied in a government school in Lebanon where he was told education was a very important aspect of his life. His parents sacrificed a lot to pay his educational fees, and he never worked before attending college. Ryan has a sister who also has a full-time job while studying. Ryan wants to graduate from college and travel to Dubai where he hopes he will work in his uncle's company. He does not mind returning to Lebanon to work when he has saved enough money in Dubai to return as he is certain he could not save money with the salaries he would get in Lebanon.

4.6.6 Hiba

Hiba is a 20-year-old girl in her second year of university studying Human Resource Management. She has dreams of completing her education to the master's degree level and working abroad. Hiba has some struggles financially especially with her mother working to cover the loan they took out for her education. She herself has been looking for a job without much luck. Hiba hopes to move to Europe one day although she knows finances may be the biggest impeding factors. Hiba who also studied in a government school also speaks about how

her teachers did not support her confidence and how she did struggle in school to get good grades. She felt the support from her family and friends which she did not find from teachers were the reason she was able to continue onto university studies.

4.6.7 Yara

Yara is a 15-year-old student who studies in a private school in Mount Lebanon. Both her parents work in order to make ends meet and help her study at the private school. Her mother is a teaching assistant in a school and her father has a government job. Yara does not like school and finds the exams extremely stressful. Yet, she has dreams to continue her education and become a human rights lawyer in Lebanon. While she sees no challenges in getting her degree, she sees challenges finding a job due to the issues in Lebanon where a person must know someone high up in order to get a job. Yet, this does not discourage her from continuing her education. She hopes to finish her education, start working and then she may think about marriage.

4.6.8 Jessie

Jessie is a first-year student at a private institute studying communication engineering in the afternoon in Lebanon. In the daytime, she works a full-time government job to help pay for her studies. She went to a public school in Mount Lebanon for her secondary school where she felt she was well encouraged to continue her education. Growing up, Jessie's mother had the only income in the family. While Jessie wanted to study pharmacy or a science, she chose communication engineering since she felt that it would help her advance in her government job in the future. She did face various difficulties choosing which university she wanted to study at since she could only choose a university with afternoon classes which she could financially

afford. While working full time, attending classes, and studying are extremely exhausting, Jessie believes in the value of her education in helping her advance in her career.

4.7 Thematic Overview

The themes that emerged from the data surrounded nine main topics. Some of these themes were reflected in a majority of the refugee interviews and professional surveys such as the theme of languages or official documentation while others were only evident in certain interviews or changed depending on the group being asked such as the theme of aspirations or parental support. The next section below will provide a detailed overview of the following themes: languages, end of the war, family support, aspirations linked to the country of origin, peace, age as a determining factor, work and finances, lack of legal documentation, and value in education.

4.7.1 Refugee theme 1: Languages

The first theme that was common in a majority of the data including the refugee interviews, the professional interviews, and the online search was the struggles of the refugees, albeit in a country where Arabic is the native language, to cope with the foreign language instruction. As mentioned, in Syria, Arabic is the language of instruction for all subjects. In Lebanon, students are required to study English or French intensively with French or English the language of instruction in maths and sciences.

The language barrier was further evident in the written responses of the professionals who likewise saw language as an issue for refugees. As one survey respondent mentioned, “The

language is one of the primary hindrances that Syrians face while trying to enroll in Lebanese schools. Most of the subjects are taught in English, which isn't the case in Syrian schools.". While a few of the Lebanese students interviewed were high school dropouts, they did not mention languages specifically as a challenge since they were exposed to the language earlier on.

The refugee interviews reflected this theme as well. As one refugee stated, "Here my problem is English. I can read, but I can't write. I am not used to it." Another refugee mentioned, "Here they stress English. I like this…. although it's true that I do not know English properly". Another older boy, Ahmad, claimed, "I lost 4-5 years of education. In Syria I was studying in Arabic, here I had to learn English, so I am still in 9th grade." Fatima said she was told to repeat first grade because she had no knowledge of French to be in the higher grade which matched her age.

This theme was further evident in the analysis of the scholarships provided at the post primary level. Not one higher education or secondary school institute provided scholarships for programs with Arabic as the medium of instruction. Thus, refugee students who may have finished higher levels of education in Syria would most probably not be able to continue their studies at a higher level regardless of the scholarships available.

4.7.2 Refugee theme 2: The End of the War

One theme which was present solely in the interviews for refugees stated that in the beginning they had the assumption that the war would end quickly. This was reflected in the quotes by Jad when he stated, "I did not take [signing up for school] seriously. I thought the war would end quickly". Mariam stated that "I stayed home my first year in Lebanon because we thought the war would end". Similarly, Ahmed stated "I was home for 2-3 years waiting for the war to

end…". Thus, commonly the refugees entered the country believing their stay would be for a short period of time only to face the reality that their stay would be extended. While this caused a break in some youth's education, it caused a direr effect in the older students who had either no paperwork to prove what level they would go to, or they would be forced to drop into a level much lower than their own. Jad mentioned in his interview "they were going to put me in classes with little children." , so he decided to wait until the war ended which unfortunately has yet to happen and was the cause of him never returning to school.

This is a theme which was not reflected in the professional interviews or the online search.

4.7.3 Refugee theme 3: Family support

The theme of family support was mentioned in all interviews. The Lebanese and Syrians both were supported by their families to pursue education. Nineteen-year-old Jad who was out of school stated "My father values education. He told me to continue my studies…". Fifteen-year-old Mariam stated, "My father wants me to continue my education, so in the future I can be something important in life." These are examples indicating the refugees had family support. This is no different than the Lebanese who also had the same support from their parents. Hiba mentioned "My mom and family gave me the most support to continue my education." When Rami, a Lebanese student who dropped out of school was asked about his parents and what they thought about his decision to drop out of school he mentioned "They weren't happy, but it was my decision." Both the Syrian interviews and the Lebanese mentioned parents who worked to support their children's education. For example, Ryan said "my dad works really hard to make sure they can pay for my university. He covers the tuition fees, but I have to make sure I can

cover my own living expenses and books because it's just too much." These are indicators that both the Lebanese and Syrian parents were supportive of education.

The professional surveys had different viewpoints regarding this matter. Some of the professionals mentioned "parents not prioritizing education" as the reason for low student enrollment in secondary education. Another survey respondent stated, "Although INGOS usually tend to say that it's about parents' awareness, I don't believe it's true and the vast majority of those who can send their kids to school, they do send them whenever there's a real opportunity." This respondent shared two important viewpoints. First, he agreed that many NGOS were under the impression that parents were disinterested in education. He also agreed that the barriers were the reasons parents did not find the opportunities viable.

Since this theme was regarding the notion that refugees are supported by their families to pursue their education, this theme was not relevant to what could be found in the internet searches.

4.7.4 Refugee theme 4: Aspirations linked to the country of origin

The fourth theme of aspirations was evident in almost all of the Syrian refugee interviews which differed from the Lebanese interviews. Many of the refugees had aspirations linked to Syria and their return to their country following the war while the Lebanese on the other hand saw education as a way out of the country. For example, fourteen-year-old Sami, a refugee, stated in his interview, "I want to be a civil engineer. There will be lots of things that need to be built after the war." Ahmed, an older respondent was asked where he hopes he would be in five years, and he responded, "If I go back [to Syria], I will study something that has to do with building. Three-fourths of our buildings are on the ground, so there's enough work for builders from now until

my grandkids work". Even the Syrian girls hoped to pursue careers which could be linked to their home country. Thirteen-year-old Fatima stated she wanted to be a doctor stating, "there are a lot of people sick and hurt from the war, and I know doctors will be needed in Syria." Many of the Lebanese on the other hand linked education to their ability to leave the country. For example, Ghassan, a 20-year-old who did not want to continue his higher education stated, "The only benefit of earning a degree would be to leave the country, and I do not want to leave Lebanon". Both 14-year-old boys stated that they wanted to leave the country after they got their certification to work and 14-year-old Yara stated, "There aren't very good jobs here [in Lebanon]. I think I will try to go to Paris to work once I have a degree."

This theme was not discussed by the professionals, and it was not relevant to the internet search.

4.7.5 Refugee theme 5: A lack of Power

There was an important quote which was stated in three of the eight interviews. This was a statement repeated by Ahmed, Fatima and Sami stating "[we need to ensure we] maintain our peace." This reflected a passive attitude towards the decisions surrounding the refugees and showed their priority of avoiding conflict. Mariam who wanted to be a human rights lawyer mentioned, "there are so many injustices against humans we are seeing on a daily basis. We cannot say anything or do anything....". Ahmed also spoke about the issues of getting his paperwork in order to legally stay in Lebanon, "I will do what I can, but I cannot complain". These statements again reflected the passive attitudes held by the refugees. The Lebanese interviews on the other hand did not have this as a common theme. The Lebanese did mention their fear of the political climate, but they were less submissive and more hopeful in their

attitudes. For example, Jesse stated “of course there is the issue of a wastas in the country … I would never get ahead with a wasta, but I am not oblivious to the possibility of falling victim to the wasta regime”. She continued to state, “I will continue to work hard, and I hope I will be able to get ahead with my hard work”. Ghassan also mentioned that he does feel there are no opportunities in Lebanon and those who have opportunities need a wasta, but he felt he could overcome this by creating his own business”. The other 14-year-old boys felt if they could travel abroad and make some capital, they could return and start their own businesses, while the other Lebanese saw hope with the prospect of travelling.

One of the professional interviews, the educational specialist, explained that refugees were not part of the policy making process with the Ministry of Education showing that in reality the refugees did not have the power to contribute to the decision-making process.

This theme was not reflected in any of the internet searches.

4.7.6 Refugee theme 6: Age as a determining factor

Another common theme that was evident in the interviews was the notion that it was more difficult for children who came to the country older. When Fatima was asked if she found it difficult to study French, she said, “no it was not difficult since I was young”. Nineteen-year-old Jad who ended up dropping out of school due to being pushed back many grade levels as an older student entering a new school system stated, “it’s much easier [for those] to have come and had their foundation here”. Nineteen-year-old Ahmed who was only in ninth grade stated, “I was in 5th grade and already too old for my grade. It bothered me”. Since Lebanese would not have a sudden switch in their education, this theme would not be reflected in the Lebanese interviews and thus is a direct cause of refugee status.

One respondent to the surveys did mention that students who are older would be disadvantaged. This survey stated, “a lack of documentation for older students” as a primary barrier to accessing post primary school options. This is because older children who did not have documentation would have to be placed in lower level classes.

None of the scholarships showed any preferential treatment for the refugees who entered the country older. On the contrary, it would have been more likely for a Syrian who was born and raised in Lebanon to earn a scholarship than one who entered Lebanon as a refugee later in life. There was no way to indicate in the scholarships whether an applicant had entered Lebanon as an older student.

4.7.7 Refugee theme 7: Work and finances

The theme of work and finances was evident in all of the different data in various forms. For example, all of the refugee boys worked in order to help the families make ends meet while the girls had slightly different ideas about work. The two fourteen-year-old refugee boys, Sami and Jad, both worked in the summers to help pay for expenses in the winter. Yet, their sisters did not have jobs outside of the house. The nineteen-year-old boys also stated that they worked full time to help pay for expenses for themselves and the entire family. Ahmed discussed how paying for legal expenses to remain in the country was burdensome. According to him, “[we have to pay] For every person in the home above the age of 12. That is assuming he didn’t infract [fail to renew his visa on time]. If he infracts then it doubles. For example, I have been here for 3 years and for every year I have to pay $200 that’s $600”. Ahmed also explained about the burden of paying for transportation and stationery for his education. As he stated:

> "Usually transportation they pay in the afternoon shifts, but in 9th grade they did not pay us for transportation to school for the morning shift
>
> I: So, you worked to pay for this
>
> R: Yes, I paid for transportation and extra pens and stationery."

The Syrian girls on the other hand had different thoughts about working. None of the fourteen-year-old girls had jobs and only one of the nineteen-year-old girls worked in a pastry shop. Fifteen-year-old Mariam stated, "I don't like to work and study. In the house its fine [to work] with my mom-but going out and working-I don't like it." She continued to state, "but to work, without getting a degree, I won't think about it". When nineteen-year-old Dana was asked if she works, she stated, "[I] stay home and take care of my family, and my mom is sick and old and she is tired, so I take care of the home." Thus, her interpretation of work was the work that she did in the home rather than an employment. Dana stated that her brothers work while her sixteen-year-old sister could not get accepted at school due to a lack of places. Since the sister was not studying and since she was not going to work, her sister was married at the age of fifteen to the first suitor that came. This indicates that the priority for employment was for the men while women were more likely to stay home and care for their families either before or after marriage. There was one Syrian female who was employed. This was 19-year-old Rania who worked in a pastry shop. She lived with her brother and sister-in-law rather than her parents and according to her, "I have to help my brother and his wife since they are giving me a place to stay. I am not married, and I am not studying so helping with money is the least I can do."

The Lebanese interviews also showed that some of the youth had to work to help support the family, but the financial burdens that come with finding adequate transportation and the burdens of administrative costs were not discussed. For example, Jessie stated she held a

government job which allowed her to work 35 hours a week to pay for her studies and help her family. None of the younger students who were around the age of 14 were working while in school, but the two school dropouts were working in a salon as a type of apprenticeship. The older boys were working to help pay for their own living expenses and to help the family with some expenses. Ryan stated, “I work in a restaurant as a waiter, so I can pay for university. I pay for things around the house when I can as well.” The older Lebanese girls were likewise willing to work and were actively looking for a job. Hiba mentioned, “I am trying to find a job, so I can work while studying”. It can be assumed that the Lebanese girls interviewed did not mind working while studying as much as the Syrian refugees. Thus, the requirement to work and the lack of finances may be a barrier for refugees, but it is a similar barrier for lower class Lebanese. The only discrepancy could be in the barriers Syrians face with regards to transportation costs and the costs of administrative fees to remain in the country. It can be noted that according to the school administrator interviewed, Lebanese students are required to pay for tuition fees and do not have their tuition fees covered as the refugees. It is unclear whether this was actually the case or not.

The concept of paid work as a barrier was also the most common theme discussed by the professionals. Eight of the respondents discussed students needing to work as one of the obstacles to higher education and eight mentioned finances as the primary factor. Although school registration fees are paid for, four of the professionals surveyed mentioned that transportation fees were an expense which was not paid for adequately. This indicates that the professionals did realize transportation costs would be burdensome to refugees.

The internet search found that while some scholarships offered to cover living expenses through the provision of stipends, this was not the case with all of the scholarships. There were

scholarships in countries such as the UK, Turkey, and Columbia where students would not be allowed to work under a student visa. This would be a greater issue for individuals who are working in order to help the family pay for living expenses, similar to some of the refugees interviewed, rather than just to cover their own living expenses. This would also be a barrier for the refugee girls who worked in their households to care for their family members and a scholarship abroad would cause a financial strain on the family in terms of childcare or nursing help.

4.7.8 Refugee theme 8: Legal status and a lack of documentation

The lack of legal documentation was an issue highlighted by both professionals in the field of Syrian refugee education and Syrian refugees. Nineteen-year-old Ahmed was the refugee suffering the most with regards to not having the required official paperwork. He mentioned how he was in Lebanon and could not get paperwork to show that he was legally in the country. When he approached the Lebanese authorities, he was told he needed a Lebanese sponsor. In order to get a Lebanese sponsor, he would have to go back to the Syrian border and re-enter with a new visa. This would risk him being caught at the border and sent to military service with the Syrian army. In Ahmed's words:

> "I try, but I am not able to (be legal). I went to the national guard, and I tried a lot to fix my paperwork, but I could not. I tried to show them my rental agreement, but they wouldn't accept it. Then they wanted a Lebanese sponsor. If I am supposed to be considered in the country under the sponsorship of a Lebanese, then I have to go to the Syrian Lebanese border. How can I go to the border? I'll lose everything. So, I lost all options to try to be legal."

Ahmed was referring to the requirement for all Syrians to serve military service for one year with the Syrian army. Any person who was between the age of 18-46 would be required to go to military service and could be stopped at the border if they had not done so. Ahmed was able to continue his education regardless of the lack of paperwork due to a policy which allowed Syrians to sit for official exams regardless of legal documentation, yet to register for secondary schools additional documents were required. This was a one-time policy for that specific year and could be repealed in later years depending on the Ministry of Education's decisions.

The internet searches also reflected the theme of legal documentation being a barrier. As mentioned, 7 of the 11 scholarships which allowed students to study in Lebanon required refugees to be legally residing in Lebanon or have official refugee status. This eligibility criteria greatly limited the post-secondary options for students in similar situations as Ahmed especially since the UNHCR stopped registering refugees in 2015.

The professionals discussed this theme as well. There were two of the twelve respondents to the surveys who felt refugees were unable to take advantage of their opportunities for education due to the unavailability of official documents or paperwork. The administrators' interview specifically discussed how documentation could be an obstacle. She discussed that all students must have a national ID document from Syria as well as documentation from a previous school in order to register for schooling. If a student was continuing at the same school, they did not need all of the documents required. If a student were to register for a secondary school, the student must have the Brevet diploma and legal residency.

4.7.9 Refugee theme 9: Value in education

One common theme in many of the refugee interviews was a theme reflecting the value the refugees still saw in education. This theme was noted in the interviews of all refugees including those who did not complete their education. For example, nineteen-year-old Jad who works in a barber shop in mount Lebanon stated, “Yes for sure. We like to continue our education, but our situation has made it difficult”. He continued to state, “Education is very important. If I had a college degree, it has worth wherever I go, and I’d have more opportunities. But the situations we faced made this a difficulty”. Nineteen-year-old Dana mentioned “Of course education is something extremely important. If it weren’t for education, we couldn’t read or write or do anything.” Likewise, while fifteen-year-old Mariam was explaining about her career choice to be a lawyer, she mentioned “the important thing is that I have a degree where I can guarantee my future. I don’t mind anything; I just need a degree so I can continue my life… if anything happens with ease”. Thus, while refugees understood they had barriers to accessing education they saw value in education as a provider of opportunities, ensuring a future, having value wherever they went, and making life easier.

The Lebanese interviews had various answers but mentioned some important themes in contrast to these mentioned by the refugees. Ghassan saw no value in completing his higher education studies, “I did not complete my education because there aren’t very many job prospects in our country. Even if there are jobs in the country, you need to know someone who is in a high position to help you get a job. The salaries in Lebanon are very low for graduates.” Ghassan saw the political landscape as a demotivating factor pulling him away from education. Other Lebanese did share similar sentiments regarding education as the refugees. For example, 19-year-old Ryan stated, “if you don’t have a degree or anything the maximum you are going to be is a khodarji (selling vegetables)”. He saw value in education for the job prospects it provided,

but in contrast to Ghassan, he was willing to use his degree to leave the country and work. Some of the Lebanese saw the value of education as their ticket to leave the country. Ghassan mentioned, “The only benefit of earning a degree would be to leave the country, and I do not want to leave Lebanon.” When Dana was asked if she would like to work in Lebanon she stated, “No, I don’t think I will. There aren’t very good jobs here. I think I will try to go to Paris to work once I have a degree”. Jessie who already had a government job did believe her education would allow her to progress in her career. Yet, she also stated “of course there is the issue of a wastas in the country, but there are places which still work modestly and the person who deserves to progress will progress. Of course, I would never allow myself to get ahead with a wasta, but I am not oblivious to the possibility of falling victim to the wasta regime”. The Syrians on the other hand did not mention the idea of using a degree to leave Lebanon or Syria. When Ahmad was asked if he would consider traveling, he explained, “If I had the opportunity to travel, I wouldn’t say no, since I am already far from my home country. But for refugees it’s not so easy.” Youssef, who was younger, did believe his studies could help him travel abroad. He mentioned that his dream was to travel and work in Dubai, when asked if this will be easy, he said “There is nothing hard if I study and work hard”. The two refugees who did mention travel were younger, and the choices to travel were tied to families they had living in those countries. It could be hypothesized that as the refugees grew older, they became more aware of the barriers due to their refugee status.

There were some professional interviewees who did not believe education was a priority for all refugees. One respondent mentioned “they are engaged in labor and income generation while deprioritizing education” as the reason for low secondary school enrollment. Yet, another respondent claimed the reason refugees were not taking advantage of educational opportunities

due to a “lack of interest on part of parents and /or their children”. These individuals felt that education was not a priority for refugees while another individual mentioned “Most of the refugees are trying at least to take advantage of the education opportunities but there are a lot of obstacles that hinder their education provision after 9th grade and even before”. This individual reflected the notion that refugees did value education, but they had barriers outside of their abilities.

This theme was not relevant to the internet search.

Conclusion

Chapter four has discussed the various data patterns that were collected from the refugee interviews, Lebanese interviews, internet search, professional questionnaires and the follow up interviews with professionals. These have been discussed with nine key themes extracted from the data. The triangulation of data has shown that the professionals working in the field do agree with the refugees in several key findings such as in the notion that languages, work, legal structures, and finances are significant barriers. Yet, there were other themes which were evident from the refugee interviews and largely understated when speaking to professionals. These include the idea that refugees had assumed the war would end quickly, the family support and views on the importance of education and the refugees’ feeling of powerlessness. Chapter five will analyze and discuss the data and the themes that have emerged while linking the findings to the research body and drawing theoretical and practical conclusions.

Chapter 5

Analysis and Interpretation of Data and Discussion of Outcomes

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four discussed the outcomes, details and emerging themes from various sources of data including the refugee interviews, Lebanese interviews, an internet search leading to an analysis of post primary school options mentioned online, questionnaires sent to professionals in the field of refugee education and follow-up interviews with several of those professionals. Chapter five will synthesize the data and emerging themes from chapter four into general conclusions while linking the findings with the research body to draw conclusions regarding the education of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and answer the research questions. These conclusions

will be summarized with a discussion on the theoretical implications and the policy level issues. Policy level recommendations then follow.

5.2 Analysis of Data

5.2.1 What are the post primary options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon from various perspectives including policy makers and young refugees

According to the data and literature, there are many options for refugees following primary education. After the age of 15, students are then free to make choices regarding their education and futures. Their choices are the following: refugees can continue in secondary education in public schools, can continue in secondary education in private schools, can study in non-formal schools which prepare students to undergo the Syrian baccalaureate exam, can study ITELAF high school, can pursue vocational education privately or publicly, can go into non-formal education options, can learn trades through apprenticeships, can work menial jobs or the few jobs open for refugees, can go back to Syria to fight in the army, can get married, or can sit home and take care of family. These are the sum of the options discussed by Syrian refugees, the literature, and the professionals. Yet, table 4 below lists these options with each of the barriers.

Table 4: Summary of all post primary options as well as barriers

Option	Barrier
continue in secondary education in public schools	Overcrowding in public schools, different curriculum from what they are accustomed to, lack of transportation, racism, documentation issues

continue in secondary education in private schools	Finances, racism, documentation issues
study in non-formal schools for the Syrian bacc.	Difficulties getting to Syria to take the exam
study ITELAF high school	Not accredited, limited spaces
pursue vocational education privately and publicly	Expensive, many vocational options not allowed to pursue work in, language of curriculum
Go into non-formal education options	Not accredited,
learn trades through apprenticeships	Refugees are banned from being employed in various trades or starting their own businesses within those trades due to labor policies
Take up paid work	Policies not allowing employment of refugees Many of the jobs open for refugees are low wage tasks
go back to Syria to fight in the army	Safety issues
get married	Economic dependency
can sit home and take care of family.	Economic dependency

All options for refugees have some sort of barrier or disadvantage and these can be seen as causal mechanisms for the continuation of poverty for refugee populations. This is when the refugees have to make the decisions to weigh their options and select the most adequate and feasible option to suit their needs.

Maslow's (1943) work on the hierarchy of needs provides a lens to analyze the refugee situation especially when looking at the different factors that the refugees must consider before selecting the option of education.

From the interviews, the refugees in Lebanon had their basic physiological needs met through UN and government aid. There were no refugees who mentioned a fear of not having food or shelter. Maslow's second level is that of security which encompasses personal security, employment, property, and resources (Maslow, 1943). This level is where many of the older refugees, in the sample, mentioned their concerns. For example, there were two refugees who prioritized "maintaining their peace" which can be interpreted as ensuring their safety and stability. The third level of love and belonging were also reflected in some of the interviews but as fully realized. For example, the children and youth mentioned close familial ties and support. The fourth level of esteem was not mentioned as a priority to the older refugee youth as they did not even strive to gain freedom or recognition or status as they felt powerless to even strive for it as they believed it would affect their safety and security. This is indicated in Ahmad's interview when he stated, "We can't really say anything or do anything about it because this is not our country and we need to maintain our peace". The younger children on the other hand felt education would help them gain that power, and thus, education was valued by the younger children. This could be due largely to the fact that the younger children had their safety needs met by their parents. Thus, they were able to strive for self-actualization more than the older

youth. While all refugees had a desire to complete their education and pursue high status careers in order to achieve self-actualization, the older youth realized that the circumstances were difficult, and many had to choose to meet their employment and personal security needs. Regardless, they did believe they could reach self-actualization once the war ends- as this would ensure their safety.

Western conceptions of what constitutes a normal career path generally begins with primary, then secondary, then tertiary education followed by employment. With refugees, there are barriers at each of these critical junctures in the refugees' path. Thus, the barriers refugees face are not just barriers to education in general. They are barriers which hinder the continuation and crossing from one phase to the other and again act as the causal mechanisms hindering the progression of refugees to higher social classes. For example, there are barriers to enter education including administrative barriers with requirements of supporting documents, and the limitation of space and transportation. Once refugees have found a place in schools, there are barriers keeping the refugee from transitioning from primary school to secondary schools. These include language barriers, a change of curriculum, discrimination from teachers, difficulty with the Brevet national exams, paperwork needed to register for exams, and financial and home requirements causing students to prefer to work rather than continue their education. If students do continue onto their secondary education and want to pursue tertiary education, they again face various barriers at that critical juncture. These are again transportation barriers, financial barriers, administrative barriers to the final Baccalaureate exams, difficulties with the curriculum, barriers to universities or colleges including a lack of finances, a lack of paperwork to qualify for residency or scholarships. Finally, if a refugee is to finish the educational pathways, there are policy barriers keeping the refugee from finding employment. Figure 4 below provides a more

visual overview of each of the barriers and when they occur. Thus, any approach to assist refugees must look at all these critical junctures and provide opportunities to ensure a refugee can be carried through the path. That said, the traditional route of primary education, then secondary education, then tertiary followed by employment does not need to be the only option and alternative approaches to education are possible which do not necessarily follow that assumption.

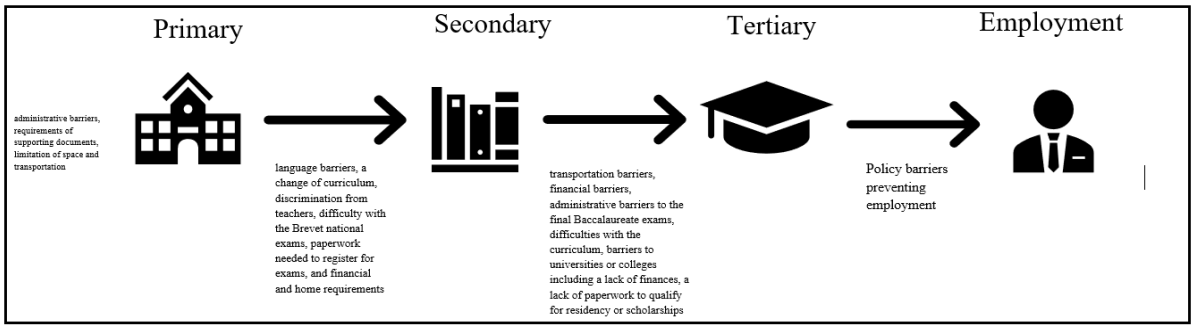

Figure 4 Critical junctures and educational barriers

5.2.2What are the barriers from various perspectives including the refugees' perspectives with regards to succeeding in the post-primary school option they would like to choose?

Despite the value refugees see in education, only 23% of refugees between the ages of 15 and 17 are pursuing their secondary education studies and far less are continuing onto their tertiary education with a majority of the older youth enrolled in schools enrolled in grades far below their level (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, 2018). Thus, refugees face a multitude of barriers which hinder their progression in education. While some have already been mentioned, the data has uncovered

several factors which may account for these barriers which have been interpreted from the data and supported by the literature review.

The data uncovered various themes which pointed to barriers to education refugees face. Many of these barriers were similarly discussed in various literature. First, the theme of language as a barrier was prominent in the literature as well as the various forms of data as indicated in chapter 4 (Watkins & Zyck, 2014). The difference in the language of instruction between pure Arabic to a mixture of both Arabic and English or Arabic and French proved to be a barrier for refugees. The other theme of the requirement to work due to a lack of finances are mentioned as an important barrier to education from the literature regarding the Syrian refugee crises (Watkins & Zyck, 2014). This was also mentioned by the professionals in the field and emerged as an important theme in the literature which reported the primary barrier from the perspective of refugees was finances (UNFPA, 2017). On the other hand, the comparison group of the Lebanese interviews also mentioned that finances and the need to work were barriers to the Lebanese citizen's ability to access tertiary or higher education. Yet, with the Lebanese, the students felt the need to support themselves rather than the whole family and secondary school students in school did not feel obliged to financially support the family. They were also more able to find work. The data showed that the finance barrier the refugees spoke of was due to a lack of transportation and the need to pay rent further exasperated by the whole families' reduced options of finding higher skilled jobs. The reason for this difference could be hypothesized as due to the laws not allowing Syrian refugees without legal residency to register vehicles, and most refugees are required to pay rent since the government has refused to support free refugee camps (El Mufti, 2014). In addition, Lebanese were able to take loans from banks to pay for their education as is in the case of Hiba which is not an option for refugees. Additional barriers were

mentioned by the professionals in the surveys which included the lack of places in government schools, early marriage, family obligations, lack of knowledge of opportunities, low quality of education, employment restrictions, a difficult curriculum, competition, lack of accredited options, a lack of transportation to schools, racism from Lebanese teachers and students and a lack of technology.

All of the barriers mentioned in the data can be categorized into two main types: resource barriers or policy and planning barriers. These categories are not black and white and may have many underlying causes or overlaps in causes such as a combined lack of resources met with hindering policies. For example, there are barriers which are a result of a lack of resources such as the barrier of a lack of finances to pay for tuition fees. While these are due to a lack of finances or resources, they are also due to a lack of policies allowing refugees to find work and therefore make money. There are also barriers which are due to policies and planning such as the issues with documentation. More complex are the barriers which can be secondary to the main two types. Appendix B has each of the barriers categorized with some barriers categorized as secondary. For example, the barrier of early marriage can be hypothesized to be a secondary barrier caused by a lack of resources. Due to low finances, families revert to marrying off their daughters to reduce the burden of multiple family members to feed. The racism against the refugees was only one barrier which did not have a clear resource or policy and planning segregation. This is subject to various studies, but it can be hypothesized that a competition for scarce resources such as jobs in Lebanon would cause for racism and thus this barrier could also stem from a resource barrier.

5.2.3 When the views of young refugees are compared with their Lebanese counterparts, do they share the same choices or are there differences in the views regarding the purpose of education and their post primary school options

One of the research questions asked about the Syrian refugees' perceptions regarding education and their options post primary school in comparison with the Lebanese. As chapter four determined, one of the themes from the interviews was that refugees saw value in education. The refugees described education in their interviews as providing opportunities, being essential, having worth everywhere etcetera. Thus, further insight and theoretical viewpoints are required to determine a theoretical explanation as to why refugees see value in education and how they feel they could benefit from education despite their refugee and legal status.

While the dissertation did employ an adapted form of grounded theory, the literature review's overview of the theories discussing the role of education in society allow for a comparison of the potential findings from the data to the theories. As discussed in the literature review, the various theories summarizing the role of education in society in general, not specifically refugee education, include theories such as human capital theory, the capabilities approach, functionalist theory, and social justice theory. There have been, also, various viewpoints which have additionally been applied to guide policy makers in the role or philosophy to follow in the education of refugees. These approaches include the humanitarian approach, the human rights approach, and the developmental approach. (Burde, 2005). These approaches are relevant to the literature since they could be built to capitalize on the refugees' perceptions of education to ensure education is provided to refugees in a way that is practical use to them.

As indicated below, the data has shown that the theories discussed in Chapter 2 are not completely sufficient in explaining the role of education for refugees and an adapted approach may be required due to the varying nature of conflict and the global environment in this decade. First, the humanitarian approach, an approach which focuses on providing education as an immediate humanitarian action with a focus on the provision of psychological support and an immediate safe space for children to return to normalcy during emergencies was not sufficiently supported by the data. Schools were available at the beginning of the academic year and they were not safe spaces immediately available for students. Yet, none of the refugee responses indicated this was an issue. Only one refugee mentioned her psychological wellbeing after the war or suggested a potential requirement of psychological aid which can be translated as a form of immediate humanitarian aid that could have been dealt with in a school setting created as per the humanitarian approach. Twenty-year-old Dana explained her mental state following the trauma of losing her home and father in the war by stating, “we were also very depressed, so we couldn’t think about studying.” Thus, immediate psychological support, which was not provided in public schools immediately following the war in Syria, could have helped Dana and motivated her to remain in school, but there were multiple additional factors which prevented her from attending school even if psychological assistance had been provided. These included, for example, responsibilities at home to care for her mother. With the protracted nature of the Syrian war and refugees residing in Lebanon for almost ten years to date, the purpose of education had to be beyond the provision of immediate humanitarian aid.

As explained, the human rights approach assumes “that the aim of education is to promote personal development, strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms, enable individuals to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, friendship and

tolerance" (Lansdown, 2007, p. 22).Thus, the human rights approach was developed in order to deter discrimination in education and to promote the idea that every human has the right to quality education which promotes his or her right to dignity and optimum development without a mere focus on monetary or financial returns (Lansdown, 2007). This approach to education was also not sufficiently reflected in the data. As mentioned previously, the approach assumes refugees will move and ultimately need skills to function in a free society. The interview data showed that the refugees realized that they lacked basic freedoms in their country of first asylum which essentially disable them from participating in a free society. This emerged from the data as a primary theme. Mariam who wanted to be a human rights lawyer was asked why she chose the specific profession of a lawyer. She responded, "there are so many injustices against humans we are seeing on a daily basis. We cannot say anything or do anything, I want to be able to do something about the injustices." A similar attitude of lacking power was reiterated by Ahmed who spoke about the issues of getting his paperwork in order to legally stay in Lebanon, "I will do what I can, but I cannot complain, we just have to live and maintain our peace". This submissive attitude towards power shows the refugees' lack of voice towards policy changing decisions and their view that education may expand their capability to be heard. Quite interestingly though was Mariam's views on education and how becoming a lawyer would give her power to stop the injustices she was witnessing. In this situation, education was seen as a deliverer of power or a way to grant her a voice. Furthermore, there were professionals who discussed various discriminatory actions with regards to the registration of refugees in classes and several policies regarding the ability of refugees to be legally employed and legally reside in Lebanon may be interpreted as discriminatory. These can be compared to theories behind the purpose of education from the human rights approach. First, it is clear that education cannot

enable individuals to participate in a just and free society because a refugee's position in society is far from just and free. One of the primary statutes of the human rights approach to education is to ensure children are free from discrimination. This is not the case from the data. Yet, when the answers are interpreted from the perspective of refugees, they do see education as enabling their participation in society especially the society they will return to after the war ends. The younger children also saw education as creating more possibilities for them in the future. The issue though is whether a human rights-based approach is still effective if individuals will not return to their country, and if it is fair to continue with that approach knowing that they are very likely going to need to learn skills to cope with a society that is far from just and free. Thus, it can be argued that the human rights approach would not be valid if children are aware that they are not part of a free society and their return to their free society may be limited.

The developmental approach which looks at emergencies as an opportunity to develop local education systems seems to have been the approach behind various strategies in Lebanon. The RACE strategies and other strategies implemented by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon can be interpreted as reflecting a developmental approach to education. For example, the various strategies to educate the refugees did aim to develop Lebanon's education system by increasing equity and the quality of education including infrastructure and teaching abilities (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2014). Yet, this approach can be argued to benefit the host country rather than critically considering the needs of the refugee populations. While, a developmental approach can be necessary to increase a country of first asylum's receptiveness to hosting what may be perceived as the burden of refugees, it does not allow for an approach which properly tends to the distinct needs of those refugees. Thus, it could

be determined that the developmental approach is not entirely an adequate approach to the Syrian refugee population's needs in Lebanon.

There were additional perspectives on the general purpose of education according to researchers in non-refugee contexts discussed in the literature review beyond the former three approaches. These well-established theories provided some insight on the possible purposes which refugees may have seen in education. The human capital approach which has been discussed in detail in previous chapters looks at education as a mere economic vessel which is an investment able to provide returns in the form of money or productivity for the economy or individual. The human capital approach as well as its criticisms have been discussed in detail in the literature review in chapter two. The literature discusses various criticisms of human capital theory with many criticisms determining that education does not translate to economic return due to various internal factors such as the complexity of human choice and individual sociological factors (Zafirovski, 2016). The literature also discusses various external factors that keep humans from seeing the benefits of education maximized. Levin and Kelley's (1994) concept of complementary inputs is clearly reflected in the barriers regarding documentation and immigration policies in Lebanon where the refugees understand that they will not be able to work in a majority of fields due to a lack of complementary inputs or enabling policies. The fact that Syrians cannot work following their education in Lebanon could point at human capital theory to be insufficient in providing an explanation as to why refugees see value in education despite their knowledge that they may not see monetary gains in their host country. Yet, one of the primary themes in the interviews was the view that many believed the war would end in the near future. When asked where they hoped to be in five years, almost all of the refugees stated they hoped to return to Syria. Human capital theory would have one assume that when policies

are put in place to deter individuals from being able to realize their return of investment in education, individuals will no longer see value in education. This was clearly not the case with the refugees who saw value in education for reasons far beyond the need of money such as Maryam's desire to help with injustices. It may be simple then to assume that refugees should be only taught and educated in fields where they can use their degrees immediately away from professional or higher degrees. Yet, one of the primary themes from the interviews was that refugees had ambitions and wanted to pursue degrees which would allow them to return to their country in order to help with the process of rebuilding and development. The refugee interviews proved that regardless of the internal and external factors, refugees saw value in education and would pursue education if they had a more enabling environment The fact that refugees still see value in education regardless of their ability to get monetary benefits points at human capital theory being insufficient in explaining the value of education.

The third approach to education or the third theory regarding the purpose of education which has been described in the literature review is the capabilities approach by Amartya Sen. Sen rejected traditional well-being approaches to international development such as the commodity approach, utilitarian approach and Rawls theory of justice (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). For example, the utilitarian approach measures a person's happiness as indicative of well-being while Sen argues that those who are impoverished may not desire more than what is realistic. This is reflected in the interviews where the older refugees mentioned they would be happy simply "maintaining their peace". Sen also criticizes Rawls's theory of justice as fairness although he does describe its value and similarity to his own capability approach (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). While Rawls' theory of justice focuses on the fairness in terms of access to resources, the capabilities approach focuses on the ability to make use of those resources. The

capabilities approach has been applied as an alternative paradigm to assessing well-being and the focus of development efforts as it focuses on the individuals' ability to choose to maximize his or her potential. This has been applied to the field of education and focuses on how and if education can increase an individual's ability to transform a resource into an ability (Saito, 2003). The capabilities approach has been discussed in conjunction with the social-justice approach which looks at the need of increasing capabilities by ensuring social justice or the ability to have equal distribution of resources, recognizing the claims of society, and allowing the active participation of all groups of society (Fraser, 1996). The interviews and data did discuss the idea that refugees were unable to transform the resource of education into the ability to work due to impeding national policies where refugees did not have active participation in society and the lack of finances due to not being able to work which could be translated into an unfair distribution of resources. It may be interpreted the refugee situation thus requires a social-justice capability approach to education, but additional factors must be taken into consideration. Sen (1993) and Tickley and Barrett (2009) envision a society where all people are equal under the law and differences in capabilities could be matched given proper education. This is not the case in the refugee situation where complementary inputs are not present.

The data suggested that education was an indicator of hope in a future that was uncertain. For example, fifteen-year-old Mariam's statement, "Anything, the important thing is that I have a degree where I can guarantee my future. I don't mind anything; I just need a degree so I can continue my life… if anything happens with ease" shows that education is seen as a beacon of hope and possibilities. Yet, when 19-year-old Jad who worked in a hair salon was asked about his future he stated, "Well now I'm working in this vocation and in 5 years I don't know". When Maryam was asked where she sees herself in reality, she stated "I don't know". Thus, education

was for an unknown future. The refugees could likely be in Lebanon in five years still as refugees or back in Lebanon. This falls in line with previous research mentioned in the literature review. Bellino's (2018) study on Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya also found that refugees did face structural liminality, but valued education as a potential to build more certainty in their lives. What Bellino found was that many were unsuccessful at using education to create certainty, and they in turn suffered with shame and depression. Sarah Dryden-Peterson (2017) discussed a similar concept of education for an unknowable future where her participants also tried to create more linear trajectories in their lives through education. While the previous studies focused on education in refugee camps in Kenya, the similarities are striking. The refugees in both Kenya and Lebanon saw education as a means of creating more certainty in their futures, yet the older refugees interviewed in Lebanon did not share the same desperation or shame for working menial jobs as the Kenyan refugees despite the fact that several of those refugees also were unable to pursue the option of education. This may be due to the difference that the refugees in Lebanon were not in camps, and thus they had surroundings that mirrored more likely their lives back in Syria. They also were more hopeful that the war would end sooner rather than later.

The theme of value in education uncovered in chapter four is in contrast to previous research conducted in refugee camps in Jordan which concluded that refugee youth did not find value in education (United Nations Higher Education United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2015). While this is an area of further research, a hypothesis could be proposed. The refugees interviewed in Lebanon were not in refugee camps and were not isolated from society as in those from the Za'atari camp in Jordan. They were not witnessing first-hand a high volume of skilled professionals unable to work. The youth outside the refugee camps were in situations

more similar to their homes and their inclusion among the Lebanese population could actually allow them to maintain their aspirations. The hypothesis would be that refugees in refugee camps have more grim aspirations than those who are assimilated amongst host societies.

The literature review provided various theories about the purpose of education and approaches to the provision of refugee education including the humanitarian approach, human rights approach, and the developmental approach. There were also various explanatory theories which are used to understand the causal mechanisms, processes and outcomes of education. These explanatory theories were not, taken on their own, able to explain and therefore address the needs of the refugees in Lebanon. For this reason an eclectic theoretical approach was adopted. Although, attention was drawn to similarities in the theories of Bourdieu, Sen, Appadurai and Tickley and Barrett.

The data indicated that the refugee population saw value in education for several reasons. First, they saw education as allowing them to have power in the future not for the sake of making money, but for the sake of being able to make change. For individuals having had no power over the course of their lives, it is no surprise that they seek a vessel to allow them that power they have lacked. Second, since education was preparation for the future, the refugees believed the war would end and they would be able to rebuild their country. Again, this reflected the idea of education giving power as they would be able to make things better when the war ended when they felt powerless at the time.

5.2.4 The Syrian refugee situation: a Bourdieusian perspective

Bourdieu's social capital theory can be applied to the refugee situation in many aspects as it has been linked with refugee research in previous studies which have attributed the low attainment of refugees in the west due to a lack of social or cultural capital (Morrice, 2009). For example, a previous study reported that refugee students lacked the social capital to navigate through the college entrance exams and the application process in western universities (Kanno & Varghese, 2010). The data on Syrian refugees in Lebanon has shown that indeed there is a stratification of society with refugees far less likely to pursue their higher education with only 23% of 15-17 year old Syrian refugees in school in contrast to the 65% of secondary school students enrolled globally and 75% of Lebanese in secondary education (UNESCO Institute for statistics, 2015). Yet, in the case of the refugees in Lebanon, the interviews showed that in many instances refugee students did not have vastly differing cultural capital from the Lebanese. Refugee students came from similar financial backgrounds and were not raised in poverty throughout their lives as indicated by the fact that all students reported having had their parents work and/or owning their houses in Syria. The refugee students had aspirations and valued education with help of adequate parental support. For example, both the Lebanese and Syrians had support from their parents who did try to convince their children to continue their education. Parents were willing to sacrifice for their children's education as they saw an inherent benefit to further studies. The parents of the youth were also incapable of tutoring students in the new languages of instruction. Yet, it was noted that parents were aware of this disparity and were willing to employ private tutors to fill this gap. Youssef mentioned, "my father makes sure me and my sister are tutored in hard subjects and we both do well at school". Dana mentioned, "My father wants me to continue my education." In addition, both the Lebanese students and the Syrian students had similar

economic capital which did hinder both parties' pursuit of higher education. All of the refugees mentioned financial insecurity. For example, Mariam, the Syrian refugee, stated "This year we found some financial difficulties". Fourteen-year-old refugee, Sami, talked about his need to work to help his father. Likewise, 20-year-old Lebanese Hiba stated she was looking for work to help her mother pay for the loan she took out to pay for their education. All of the Lebanese interviewed who were over the age of 18 were also employed as they struggled financially to pay for their own expenses as well as tuition fees.

In addition, elements of Bourdieu's theories provide a theoretical framework to explain the refugee phenomenon. There was a blatantly evident linguistic capital that Syrian refugees lacked with relation to the language of instruction which falls in line with Bourdieu's theory. The Syrian refugees were not accustomed to studying in English or French and as mentioned in Chapter 4, those who came to Lebanon older were at a larger disadvantage. On the other hand, students who entered the country younger had this disadvantage diminished. Nonetheless, this was a large contributor to the demotivation of many of the Syrian refugees as they grew older.

In addition, Bourdieu's theory of field provides important insights into the refugee situation. As explained, field theory claims there exists an elite with the cultural, social and economic capital allowing them to make the rules. In the refugee situation in Lebanon, the field is dominated by the Lebanese. According to Bourdieu's theory, this elite will create rules which further progress their interests (Hilgers & Mangez, 2014). As Naidoo (2004) explains, this reflects in the field of higher education. Thus, the Lebanese who make decisions in higher education institutes and those Lebanese who are policy makers in the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of education can be considered the elite. The protectionist policies can be considered as a method which recreate societal inequalities in which the Lebanese continue to have an

overarching advantage in the educational and economic context of Lebanon which maintains the refugees as second class. Waters and Leblanc (2005) discuss the concept of nationalism in education and the effect of that on refugees by asking: "why and how refugee children should be educated when by definition they are excluded from full participation in the activities of any national body politic"(P. 132). Waters and Leblanc explain that one of the primary roles of education in society is to promote the concept of the nation and the citizen. Thus, when refugees are involved, they are torn between educating their children as citizens of the host country or citizens of their home country which are often very contradictory with the futures highly uncertain. Thus, in this situation, refugees enter a field where they are secondary agents subject to the decisions of the dominant agents in society hoping to promote their own nationalistic benefits. Further examples of dominant agents are the examples of Universities in various countries who have created scholarships for refugees having criteria for admissions which reflect the dominant agents in the field of higher education and their conception of cultural and academic capital. As discussed, these include English language levels, the requirement of diplomas, and requirements.

Bourdieu's concept of field in the context of refugee education, identifies the institutional means by which Syrian refugees were excluded in education because the rules of educational competition and achievement were rigged against them. Regardless, many of the refugees in the sample saw war as a temporary phenomenon and were confident that their educational investment would be beneficial when circumstances improved. Thus, education could be seen as a gateway of hope. It was their way to aspire to rebuild their country and show support and hope for peace.

5.2.5 Theories to explain why refugees remain disadvantaged in society: an application of Appadurai and Sen's theories

With multiple barriers due to scarce resources and policies putting refugees at a disadvantage, there need to be more applicable theories to account for the disparity in the potential of futures between refugee and non-refugee populations. Appadurai (2004), discussed in the literature review, identifies the disparities between the prospects between rich and poor as relating to the capacity to aspire and realize aspirations. Appadurai's definition of aspiration is not the ability to have wishful thinking, but it is the ability to navigate between aspiration and reality where if the poor are given the tools to aspire in terms of access to information and a voice to effect social change, the poor would be able to get past their social class. As previously stated, Appadurai's claims are based on a society where individuals are all equal under the law. Despite this disparity, the research indicates Appadurai's theory demonstrates some relevance to the research on Syrian refugees. The refugees did not have access to essential information regarding their own opportunities. For example, none of the refugees were able to state that they were aware of scholarships for refugees or what qualifications are required for them to attain a scholarship. When Rania was asked whether she was aware of any opportunities for refugees to study with scholarships, she said, "In Lebanon, education is expensive and difficult, and I can't go to College now". When Sami was asked if his 10th grade year would be paid for by the United Nations or their partners, he stated "I am not sure, this year I did not pay for my 9th grade tuition. I am not sure what the rule is for next year". Thus, there was a lack of information sent to refugees. There are reports of educational opportunities communicated to refugees through text messages on phone and online, but those same reports cite challenges with getting information to refugees in urban settings which account for a significant number of the refugees in Lebanon

(Culbertson, et al., 2016). This method of communication also assumes refugees have access to a phone or internet and are registered with UNESCO. Thus, many refugees may not have access to information which notifies them of educational or other such opportunities. In addition, the refugees did realize they did not have the ability to participate in policy changing activities. As Ahmed mentions. “In Lebanon we are not able to put anything in our names, we cannot register cars or motorcycles in our names. We are not able to take the Lebanese citizenship. We have official paperwork in Lebanon that we must renew every six months. We can’t really say anything or do anything about it because this is not our country and we need to maintain our peace”. While the above quote does point at the refugees being unable to effect policy decisions, there is more than underlying social structures hindering an individual from accessing information. These are policies and laws put in place to deter individuals from accessing the full benefit of society. Thus, in its entirety the aspirations theory is not enough to explain the observed phenomenon regarding the lack of enrollment in secondary and higher education. This is due to several factors. First, it must be noted that the Syrian refugees in this research had a capacity to aspire as children. All the children before grade nine had high reaching aspirations. For example, Sami wanted to be a civil engineer, Fatima wanted to be a doctor, and Mariam wanted to be a human rights lawyer. The respondents were asked how they hoped to reach their aspirations. According to Appadurai’s theory, all individuals are capable of aspiring in the sense of wishful thinking, but the difference between the future prospects of Lebanese and refugees should be attributed to a marked difference between the ability of the Lebanese and the refugees to navigate their way from their aspirations to make them into reality. Yet, the Lebanese respondents had arguably just as unclear navigation plan to fulfil their aspirations as the refugees. For example, when Rami was asked about how he hopes to achieve in the future he

stated, “I do not have a plan”. At a more extreme level, when Ghassan was asked what his hopes are for the future he said, “I do not think about the future.” While it is difficult to conclude definitively that both the Lebanese and the Syrian refugees had equal abilities or lack thereof to fulfil their aspirations, the preliminary data points at the notion that there may be another explanation as to why there is such a stark difference in secondary and higher education enrollment. Many of these children came from families which were considered the skilled working class in Syria. For example, all of the Syrian youth’s fathers worked in Syria, as was evident in the chapter 4 summary of each interviewee, and several specifically indicated that they used to live in their owned homes where they did not have the burden of rent they faced in Lebanon. While no student explicitly mentioned that his/her parents had a college degree, Fatma for example mentioned that all of the ladies in her family had finished school. -The Syrian youth’s family backgrounds were quite comparable to the parents of the Lebanese youth interviewed who also did not have college degrees but were working and financially stable. The main idea here is that the poverty they face as refugees was a sudden onset and in the minds of the refugees, the end of the war may be just as sudden. Thus, the lack of a culture of aspiration is not an ingrained lack of aspiration which has been passed from one generation to another as Appadurai argues, and it is not one which educational institutes can overcome simply by adjusting the curriculum. The culture of a lack of aspiration among refugees is seen in older youth who have been awakened to the realities of their social structures. Thus, the question arises as to whether in the case of refugees the lack of aspiration is due to a reduced capacity to aspire due to a lack of agency and overwhelmingly oppressive social structures or a real lack of options. The data from the online search and interviews of professionals regarding the opportunities for Syrian refugees further supports the notion that the lack of aspirations is due to factors more rigid

than what Appadurai claimed are underlying social structures. These are legal structures creating a factual lack of opportunities, power and prospects rather than a lack of a capacity which could be merely developed. As mentioned, the lack of opportunities after the completion of the traditional path of education could be due to a shortage or complete absence of complementary inputs to education (Levin & Kelley, 1994). For example, while the Lebanese struggled to pay for their higher education, the institutional structures in place allowed for Lebanese to overcome these struggles more easily than the refugees. Hiba mentioned that her mother was able to take out a loan to pay for her education. This is one option which would not be available to refugees as most personal loans from Lebanese banks are open to Lebanese citizens only e.g. (BankMED, 2020) (BBAC, 2016) (Byblos bank, 2005).

Amartya Sen's capabilities approach which was also discussed in chapter two can be applied in the Lebanese refugee situation in order to explain why refugees remain disadvantaged in society. First, as discussed, Sen measures wellbeing as an individual's capability to lead a life he or she sees value in through both beings and functionings (Sen & Nassbaum, 1993). This is in contrast to traditional ways of measuring wellbeing which consisted of measuring resources for example. According to the capability approach an analysis of capabilities looks at measuring the possibility of multiple or a combination of functionings or what Sen calls capability sets. In the situation in Lebanon, the obstacles or barriers refugees faced show that the capability sets for refugees are limited. For example, while scholarships are available for refugees, the capability approach allows an analysis of the multiple barriers such as the inability to work while studying or care for a family while studying. This means the capability set is limited, and while the scholarships are available, the capability of refugees to take advantage of these scholarship becomes the issue. This can be further applied when analyzing the capability of students to take

advantage of education opportunities in Lebanon. While afterschool programs are available free of cost, there are issues of transportation, paying for stationary, and time invested in education rather than labor which may be required to ensure livelihoods. Thus, again the capability set determines that refugees have a limited capability to actually take advantage of educational opportunities. Sen and Naussbaum's approach is not without limitations as it assumes a neutral political climate. In the situation of refugees, the capabilities to pursue work after having completed an education are limited not just due to social structures but due to policy level barriers which have been created for nationalistic policies. The section below explains these barriers further.

5.2.6 Structural violence and institutional racism within national policies

As was discussed in the context overview or the introduction of this dissertation and the interviews with the professionals and refugees, the policies regarding employment and the document requirements which would allow legal residency of refugees in Lebanon were one of the primary barriers to allowing older youth access to education. These barriers to opportunities made by legal structures can be linked with the concept of structural violence (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence is defined as the systems and structures such as legal systems, policies, and other forms of discrimination in a certain society which deny individuals their basic needs. The concept of structural violence has also been linked with the concept of institutional racism and critical race theory discussed in the literature as linked to asylum policies in the west (Briskman, 2015). As mentioned, institutional racism are the policies, systems and social structures put in place to discriminate against a group of society (Williams, 1985). This is reflected in the various areas of the lives of Syrian refugees in Lebanon including the policies regarding the refugees' right to work, schooling, and the requirements regarding educational scholarships. For example,

Syrian refugees are required to pay fees to legally reside in the country and pursue an education and are unable to take loans from most banks. When they reside in the country legally and pursue an education, they have multiple barriers to continue their education. Many find difficulties with languages, a difficult curriculum, finding empty places to register in schools, affording educational fees in private institutes, paying for transportation and more. In addition, refugees without documentation in the country are not allowed to register cars or own homes which add onto the financial burden they face keeping them from continuing their education (Human Rights Watch, 2016). There are furthermore additional cases of discrimination mentioned in the professional interviews which keep refugees from being able to register their children in schools or be taught in the same manner as a Lebanese child. For example, as mentioned, these included situations where a school would not allow Syrians to register in schools until the last few days of registration or the schools that would tell refugee parents that registration in schools were closed when there were still places open. Assuming a refugee actually completes his or her education, there then is a barrier to find work and make use of the education due to labor policies keeping highly skilled refugees from pursuing jobs reserved for Lebanese and a lack of opportunities keeping the unemployment rate for Syrian refugee youth at around 61% (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, 2018). Thus, the refugees face multiple forms of barriers at various levels exasperated by racist and discriminatory national policies keeping them from maximizing their human potential for their own independence and the growth of the economy.

As Galtung (1969) explains, structural violence is due to an imbalance in power which can be confirmed in the Lebanese situation. First, as explained by the employee in the UNHCR, refugees are not part of the policy making process in Lebanese ministries. These policies which

so blatantly hinder the right of refugees to work or maximize their human capital potential are put together by dominant groups in society-the Lebanese and UN consultants.

As described in chapter 4, the scholarships likewise reflected various barriers for refugees which could similarly reflect the notion of structural violence. For example, refugees needed to have legal permits, exemplary grades, exceptional English skills, financially independent family members etcetera in order to benefit realistically for the scholarships in place. While it may seem counterintuitive to label a system developed to reduce barriers to the access to education as condoning structural violence, the fact that the scholarships were plagued with their own obstacles is significant.

With a surface level insight, it may be simple to blame the policy makers in Lebanon and label the policies as racist. Yet, it may be oversimplifying the issue to merely blame the country putting the policies in place and declaring the country as condoning structural violence or institutional racism. What must be considered is the idea that Lebanese officials see their policies as "protecting the interests of the Lebanese citizens" in an already weak economy with weak job prospects (Annahar, 2014).Thus, while the policies may seem racist in nature, the structural violence is at a more global scale. There is a responsibility of the global community, namely the western countries refusing the entry of refugees and forcing them to reside in already weak economies. Thus, it could be argued that the structural violence is a global phenomenon with the Lebanese government and people as much victims to structural violence and institutional racism as the refugees. This could be further supported by the fact that Western countries are hosting exponentially less refugees compared to Lebanon- the UK holding around 127000 total refugees from around the world, and the US stopping all Syrian refugee resettlement as of January 2017 (UNHCR, 2020) (Cooper & Shear, 2017).

5.3 Overview of theories in explaining the role of education and their application in illuminating the data

This chapter has thus far made several key points. First, while refugees value education, current theories do not fully explain the refugee situation. Throughout history, much of the theories on the role of education have been based on theories developed by white European/Western males. These include, for example Gary Becker's Human Capital theory, where the aspirations for good jobs is also an aspiration of refugees, especially in the context of the reconstruction of Syria. But there are barriers to these aspirations, notwithstanding the continuing war. Bourdieu's theories, particularly that related to field, throws light on the institutional barriers Syrian refugees encountered. While researchers such as Amartya Sen and Appadurai have examined the conditions of people in poverty and the role of education in developing countries, it is Tickley and Barrett that have drawn attention to inequalities, including those relating to the law that refugees confront. These theories highlight the limitations in the normative views of refugee education developed by aid agencies who it can be argued to have romanticized view of conflicts and emergencies that lead to the refugee situation, as short-term. Second, there are many options for refugees post-primary school, but all options come with barriers. Refugees are required to weigh the cost of education with the limited potential of return of education given then protracted nature of conflict and the policies set in place hindering the future prospects of refugees in Lebanon. Furthermore, many of the policies hindering the futures of refugees may be seen as forms of structural violence or institutional racism, but this racism is at a more global scale with western countries pushing the burden of hosting refugees onto weak economies. In conclusion, this study unveils a differing realm of education requiring an alternative conception of the role of education for the current protracted nature of conflicts

beyond those already mentioned in the literature. This differing concept will be detailed further in the next section.

5.4 Summary of theoretical implications

There are several unique theoretical viewpoints which this dissertation touches upon. First, there is the theoretical question regarding the purpose of education and higher education for refugees as well as theoretical implications regarding the Lebanese protectionist employment policies hindering refugees from a multitude of careers. This section provides a summary regarding the theoretical perspectives uncovered by the data and supported by the literature and provides an alternative approach to providing education to refugees.

One of the primary goals of this dissertation is to use theories which can provide insight into refugees' views on education. As discussed, traditional theories regarding the purpose of education do not sufficiently account for the differing legal situations of refugees. Yet, the data and literature all support the notion that refugees valued education despite being aware of the policy barriers keeping them from being able to work in their host country. This is in stark contrast to human capital theory claiming education is only beneficial as long as it provides monetary returns for the individual. The refugee interviews could be interpreted as reflecting a differing value of education. From the interviews, education is described as a source of power and hope in a time when much hope and power is lost. The refugees feel that an education will help them rebuild their country which means they find education as allowing them to pursue an active role in society. This has both symbolic worth as well as literal worth. For one, it is a fact that an educated society will be required to rebuild the infrastructure and systems of a war-torn country, but the fact that the children mentioned this as the aim behind their want for an

education reflects the hope and power they see from the pursuit of knowledge. Mariam who wanted to be a human rights lawyer saw education as allowing her to fight injustices and help those oppressed. In reality, none of the refugees saw education as a way to make more money or find a better husband. The focus of education was to be a more credible, active member with the power to build and develop society.

The insight regarding the value of education for refugees has helped provide an alternative approach to educational provisions for refugees. This approach should help allow refugees to think critically about how they could benefit their society in a more globalized context in order to facilitate, eventually, their return to their country as active members of society. Yet, since it is very possible that individuals may not return to their country, the focus of education can be serving their own community and allowing refugees to be more economically self-sufficient. Thus, a new approach would be necessary. With this approach younger children are integrated within national education systems with academic and counselling sessions to support refugees throughout their education with the core values to increase solidarity. Yet, older students would have the option to move into different schools provided by the international community. For older students, education can be provided with a focus on allowing refugees to find solidarity with the core values of community service, communication, initiative to pursue globalized opportunities which in turn will have the students find power in their actions and increase their inner strength. The academic focus would be the reconstruction and strengthening of infrastructure and public systems in Syria, as well as financial and technological skills which would allow for more economic independence. This can be done through a focus on two types of vocational and educational programs: those focused on the strengthening and the rebuilding of Syrian society both in Syria and in host countries and those focused on skills which can be used

in a globalized context. These vocations can target construction, building, teaching, health services, and borderless skills such as coding or design.

A new educational approach would focus more on vocational skills through certifications, diploma programs or vocational pathways that could lead to immediate monetary returns within the refugee and/ or host community and can be used for employment purposes remotely in globalized contexts in order to bypass protectionist policies. These same skills and trades can be taken back and utilized to rebuild their home countries after the end of the war. Thus, a new approach would not be a humanitarian approach with only immediate effects, nor a human rights approach, or a developmental approach, but it would be an approach to ensure relevant educational provisions for refugees in protracted conflict situations.

5.5 Policy recommendations

The data uncovered various themes which allowed for both theoretical insights and practical policy level recommendations. An analysis of the options for Syrian refugees show that all of the educational options have underlying barriers reducing the relevance of the option of education in the short term as well as the accessibility of educational options. The data shows that there need to be educational options which would be applicable regardless of the outcome of the war and targeted in a way that would be relevant. These options would need to be relevant both short term and long term as well as implementable considering the financial circumstances of the refugees. The below sections highlight the main issues uncovered from this dissertation with policy level recommendations for resolutions.

5.5.1 Issue 1: The public-school system in Lebanon is lacking the numbers and capacity to properly educate the large number of refugee students, and the role of the private sector is minimal in comparison to the load on the public sector.

While the current approach of incorporating refugee children within the Lebanese public school system and the creation of afternoon shift schools may have provided educational opportunities to a large number of refugee students who may have been otherwise unable to study, there is still an issue with capacity. Thus, there needs to be a greater role for the private sector. 57% of Lebanese students choose private schools and a voucher system could help absorb an increased number of refugees (Abdul Hamied, et al., 2017). If these partnerships merely allowed for private schools to accept students to reach the full capacities, it would be beneficial to the students and the schools. This would mean that a private school with three more seats available in third grade would be able to get government funded vouchers to educate three more students. While some may argue that this may have equity implications, it can be noted that not all public schools in Lebanon are of equal quality and standards (Abdul Hamied, et al., 2017). Thus, instead of having children stay home due to an overcapacity in public schools. The government could provide standard vouchers to have those students find seats in private schools in the area. Since funding may be an issue, vouchers could be set at a standard amount equivalent to the cost of educating a student in a public school in Lebanon and supported by the international community. Alternately, extra seats in private schools could be auctioned off in a government bidding system.

In addition, the government could set incentives to help promote the provision of scholarships for refugee students in private vocational or secondary schools. These incentives could include tax breaks, special recognition or awards, or free marketing on the ministry's

social media outlets. For private sector schools, these could prove mutually beneficial and potentially financially preferable.

5.5.2 Issue 2: Many options for secondary schools are not accredited. For example, the ITELAF high school diploma.

The United Nations should make more strategic initiatives aimed at setting standards for UN recognized primary and secondary diplomas which must be recognized by all UN countries and higher education institutes within these countries. This could be similar to the UK's National Agency for the Recognition of Certificates documentation which shows the comparability of all diplomas and degrees from around the world (UK NARIC, 2020). In order to facilitate the recognition of non-formal programs, these programs could be given recognition through a UN central qualification framework and regulating agency. For example, OFQUAL in the UK regulates qualifications and places them on the levels of the UK qualifications framework. A similar globally recognized qualification framework could help place NFE programs on such scales.

5.5.3 Issue 3: older children are being forced down several grade levels due to differences in the language of instruction and differences in curriculum. Other students have finished all or part of high school, but due to the war, have been unable to attain their documents from their home countries. This is demotivating especially for students who were one or two years away from attaining their national diploma.

Rather than focusing on the incorporation of students within a national school system, The United Nations could establish a United Nations K-12 curriculum with internationally relevant curriculum standards, textbooks (subject to translation), and course descriptions. This curriculum

should be skills based rather than information based and focus on big concepts and transferable skills in literacy, numeracy, sciences, and social sciences. Supplementary material could be included as long as the skills and big ideas are covered. This curriculum could be translated into the language required for the specific group of refugees. There may be several concerns with this proposal. First and foremost is the quality assurance of these courses. In order to ensure fully quality assured programs, the United Nations could develop a centralized examination system or awarding body which would assess refugee students at the end of each academic year. This could also allow refugee students above the age of 17 to sit for an accredited and quality assured set of exams which would allow refugee students an international high school diploma equivalent that could be used in any UN country. These exams would be similar to the PISA examinations in their attempt, albeit arguably successful, to ensure cultural sensitivity and maintain their ability to be neutral and not context based. The exams would likewise be written in the language required by the group of refugees. Another possible concern would be the doubts regarding the feasibility of the endeavor. While creating a curriculum which is applicable to students across the world and examinations which are translatable into various languages may seem farfetched, the educational experiences prove otherwise. The International Baccalaureate (IB) body has created its own curriculum which is currently implemented across the world. The examinations are fully quality assured by the International Baccalaureate central awarding body which thus indicates that the idea to create an international quality assured school system adaptable to multiple contexts is far from farfetched. One approach may be to adapt the IB curriculum for the purpose of the United Nations' refugees to include only the most important transferrable academic and personal skills. Transitional approach theorists are strong proponents of also infusing post-conflict curricula with peace-building and justice seeking skills within schools (Davies , 2017).

This concept can also be implemented to help promote cohesion and a value for peace. In order to avoid any perceived politicization of the curriculum, the curriculum would undergo a formal review process by all implementing countries with countries creating their own process for approval of supplementary information. Another concern would be the training and availability of teachers. When the course is taught in the native language of instruction of the refugees, the courses could be taught by educated refugees who would go through centralized intensive training programs. This would be beneficial to refugee families who could potentially have an additional source of income. Funding is also a very likely and valid concern. The cost of this endeavor includes the cost of expertise in curriculum development, examination development and curriculum review. This would have to come out of United Nations and partner donor funds. While ideally the schools would be free until year 12, the cost of secondary school would have to be equivalent to the cost of secondary schools for national citizens. The cost of implementing the curriculum would be diminished if the curriculum could be taught at the same school buildings of the host country-similar to the afternoon shift schools in Lebanon. While there are multiple possible concerns with the proposal, the benefits are tremendous. First, a United Nations curriculum would allow refugees who travel from country to country to continue their education seamlessly. Second, it would allow students who do not have official documentation to sit for exams to pass from one grade level to the next. This will help keep older students motivated and potentially reduce the dropout rate. A United Nations awarding body would be highly regarded and recognized around the world keeping children from being lost learning a curriculum which would not be recognized in their own countries.

5.5.4 Issue 4: While there are opportunities for refugees to study at primary school, scholarships are concentrated in higher education- there is a dramatic gap in the opportunities for refugees to complete their secondary school education.

The missing bridge between primary school and higher education simply nullifies the worth of the higher education programs. For a student to even reach higher education, he or she should have been able to afford three years of full-time study including books, transportation and stationery. Without any support during those three years, many students may not find the time invested in education worthwhile when they could be working full-time to earn money to support their family. Thus, international organizations should refocus on post-primary school options such as funded vocational schools or secondary school scholarships which include transportation costs, stationary and other incentives. These incentives could be work-study programs which would give the option to students to earn a stipend for working in schools in administrative roles.

5.5.5 Issue 5: While there are several good intentions to offer scholarships for secondary and higher education, these scholarships are short sighted and fail to offer feasible post-primary options for refugees.

If institutes, governments or NGOs are planning to offer scholarships, the following questions must be asked by the concerned institute.

1. What is the language of instruction of my institute and how does that compare to the language of instruction of the refugees? How could I bridge this gap? i.e. does the university need to offer language bridging courses as part of the scholarship
2. Are living expenses and transportation costs covered?
3. Are tuition fees fully covered in addition to books and instructional materials such as laptops or calculators?
4. Can students legally earn an income and work at the same time?

5. Will this opportunity provide a recognized degree or diploma that can help students progress within the host country and in the home country?
6. How will I communicate this scholarship in order for refugees to be aware of the scholarship's existence?
7. How can I make sure the scholarship is going to a refugee who has been disadvantaged due to the war rather than an individual who has registered as a refugee, but who has had no change of situation? For example, a personal statement or an interview could ensure that individuals requiring the scholarship are the ones benefitting.

5.5.6 Issue 6: refugees see value in education and see it as a way to rebuild their country after the war. Therefore, the local curriculum is irrelevant to refugee needs

Since refugees viewed education as a means to gain skills to help rebuild their country, there could be a refocus on trades or vocational education tracks for the purpose of reconstruction. Refugees, especially those who have large gaps in their schooling and may be disadvantaged due to their advanced age, may be interested in vocational education tracks which would allow them to acquire the skills needed to rebuild infrastructure, redevelop policies, support healthcare, and create national systems. NGOs willing to organize and provide vocational educational programs focused on post war rebuilding efforts would be highly popular with the refugees. These can be beneficial in two ways. First, these educational programs could employ and pay refugees as well as low income Lebanese as mentors in a type of apprenticeship program. Second, the vocational tracks would allow students and youth to learn useful trades such as stone cladding, painting, building, roofing, and plumbing which can be used to rebuild their post-war nation as well as find work as skilled laborers in their host countries.

In order to build further on factors which may affect the motivation of refugees', school curricula could focus on examples of rebuilding efforts in order to make programs more relevant and attractive for refugee students. Thus, if students were to study a local curriculum, teachers could be provided with professional development on how to incorporate the more relevant topics within lessons. This can be through the use of specific examples or social activities in schools.

The only issue with this approach is the idea that the war may continue to linger which could prove detrimental psychologically for refugees who have built their lives upon the notion that they will return to their country to rebuild. Thus, the vocational tracks should also provide skills that can be utilized in the host country and focus on the idea of resilience and creating opportunities despite difficult circumstances.

5.5.7 Issue 7: Policies regarding the employability of refugees keep refugees reliant on international aid for survival

An analysis of the employability policies in Lebanon needs to be revisited. While these policies from the viewpoint of Lebanese politicians were simply protectionist in nature, they could be seen as forms of institutional racism or structural violence albeit one could argue that this is violence against the weak Lebanese economy by the international community. This can be seen as a double-edged sword to policy makers where a lack of protectionist policies could allow refugees to devalue the local labor force while the protectionist policies keep refugees dependent on international aid which alone is not financially viable in the long term. This is where the international community should refocus efforts on job creation and investments within host countries. For example, afternoon schools where teachers would be teaching refugees could be contracted to the most qualified teachers regardless of nationality with a set and defined minimum

salary. In addition, scholarships for higher education studies can focus on borderless majors which allow for job opportunities that are not bound by geographical location and can help bypass strict protectionist policies. These would include internet-based majors such as web development, coding, graphic design, translation, and writing which would allow for freelance jobs to be done remotely. A renewed focus on efforts to not only award refugees with scholarships, but to work with private corporate partners would be beneficial. These would be facilitated through agreements between private companies who can sponsor academically capable refugees after year nine to continue in secondary schools in private institutes and then higher education institutes in order to continue working with the sponsoring multinational company after graduation.

Issue 8: There is a disparity between the views of refugees and those of the professionals

As mentioned in chapter 4, there were some disparities between the viewpoints of the professionals in the field of education and the viewpoints of refugees. Thus, a bottom up approach to policy making should be adapted which would allow for refugees to have more of a voice in the policies that directly relate to them. This can be done by piloting decisions on small groups of refugees before implementing decisions on the entire country when possible and assessing the impact of decisions by collecting data from refugees after implementation.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

Furthermore, this study opens the door for further research to be developed. From a non-educational perspective, the first part of this study unveils the opportunities there are for post-primary education in Lebanon and determines whether the students are aware of these opportunities or not. None of the youth mentioned any knowledge of scholarships or even if their

education was covered financially. This triggers interest in research into the modes of marketing or communicating information to these refugees in order to maximize the impact of opportunities. Larger scale, quantitative studies may look at the prevalence of certain viewpoints on education while longitudinal studies can follow the same children from eighth grade into year twelve or even adulthood to look at the exact factors or policy decisions that lead to certain career choices or future prospects. Furthermore, it may be interesting to do a similar comparative study which will look at different religions of Syrian refugees or Syrian refugees in different areas or from different socioeconomic backgrounds such as those in the informal camps in Lebanon or a comparison of those in formal camps in Jordan versus those in urban settings. Also, a similar study can be made in order to study the same views regarding education among Palestinian refugees living in camps in Lebanon since their situation is different than the situation of Syrians due to the Palestinian conflict having a longer history. This study could also be expanded to include a comparison of viewpoints of refugees in various other countries or regions to see how adaptable the approach is in other contexts. In addition, the provision of circulars to the schools from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education could trigger a study which would use content analysis to analyze the information in the circulars in relation to other policies or political occurrences that may have affected those decisions. The words in the circulars could be analyzed as well as the implications in the classroom and on refugee students.

In addition, the interviews with the Lebanese showed some concerns with the Lebanese education system which could be further probed in other studies. For example, Rami and Omar both dropped out of school before the 9th grade due to failing classes and what they claimed was also a lack of support from their teachers. Thus, there seems to be a lack of learning support for students and academically weak students are falling from the system. Rami also mentioned that

he wanted to be an artist, and his love for art was never supported at school since art is not an assessed subject in official examinations. This also indicates a concern with the focus of the Lebanese curriculum not complementing different types of intelligences. In addition, Ghassan's concern with the corrupt political landscape demotivated him from pursuing his higher education. This could also be a premise for further researchers interested in the link between educational motivation and the political economy.

5.7 Conclusion

An analysis of the literature has determined that there while refugees highly value education despite the structural racism there are still various barriers to education for refugees. These have led to the development of theoretical insights as well as policy level recommendations.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The dissertation has outlined the post primary options for Syrian refugees in Lebanon which have been mentioned in the literature, those mentioned in internet searches and information collated from interviews and the questionnaires of professionals. It has then assessed the perceived options and obstacles from the viewpoint of the refugees. The study used semi structured one-on-one interviews of male and female 13-15-year old's and 19-21-year old's and contrasted them with the analysis of interviews from a similar, non-refugee group of local

Lebanese citizens. The epistemological and ontological viewpoint adapted is the critical realist approach with a realist version of grounded theory utilizing abduction implemented to analyze the data without any predefined assumptions regarding the value of education. For example, abduction was utilized when comparing responses of field professionals and refugees. This is to ensure all perspectives are covered in relation to the phenomenon, so that the multiple sources of data can be analyzed and compared to develop theories

The study has various limitations. First, the sample size was limited and consisted of refugees from one area of Lebanon. Thus, it is possible that overgeneralizations could result and concurrent research on larger scales could help confirm the findings. Second, the study does not focus on the same refugees over time and changes in perceptions between the younger children and the older youth cannot interpreted as how the refugees will change in the future. Third, the professional interviews were also from a small sample of respondents who may not necessarily be the most informed about refugees.

Despite the various limitations, the study has resulted in the development of several conclusions in relation to the research questions. The first research question was related to the post primary options for refugees. There are various options for refugees which range from continuing their education to deciding to marry early or return to Syria to fight in the army. A comprehensive list was compiled using the data. The second research question was regarding the barriers refugees face when wanting to progress their education. Several theories were discussed in order to provide a discussion or theoretical framework around the situation. These included Appadurai's aspiration theory, Sen's capability approach, the concept of structural violence as well as Bourdieu's concepts of fields and capital. It was found that there are multiple barriers unique to the refugees that act as causal mechanisms hindering the social mobility of refugees.

These are at various critical junctures in the assumed natural flow of a youth's career: barriers to enter education, barriers to continue from primary school to secondary school, barriers to continue from secondary to tertiary education, and barriers to find suitable employment after completing tertiary education. These barriers can be categorized as resource barriers, policy barriers, or a combination of both which somehow mirror the concept of institutionalized racism or structural violence. Thus, aid organizations should focus on removing barriers at each of these critical junctures. All of these options have barriers and refugees find themselves needing to assess the pros and cons regarding each of these options. The third question was the differences in the viewpoints on education and the options between Lebanese and refugees. It has been determined that Syrian refugees highly value education regardless of the status of the war or their refugee status. They see education as giving them a voice and power and allowing them to eventually return and rebuild the country they fled from. The Lebanese interviews showed the value education was largely tied to the ability to leave the country. Fourth, it was found that normative theories adopted by multinational organizations do not adequately guide theory. For example, the human rights approach to education is not sustainable with the protracted nature of conflict, the human rights approach assumes refugees are in a society where they are equal to the local population and the developmental approach focuses on the needs of the host country rather than the refugees. That means, education can be provided in order to increase personal strength by promoting power and promoting refugees' voice. This approach would allow them to pursue vocations which would lead to the rebuilding and strengthening of their country and allow them to seek creative solutions to their situation by pursuing jobs and positions which would allow them to work regardless of their location. These various conclusions have allowed for additional policy recommendations to be made and have provided recommendations for further research.

Almost a decade, over 500 thousand deaths, 5 million refugees and 12 million injuries into the Syrian Civil War, has made it unarguably one of the most catastrophic events of the 21st century. Aid organizations have struggled with how to respond to such a disaster and host countries have had to find a balance between protecting their own populations while managing the influx of refugees. Thus, a holistic approach to educational provision is necessary which will allow for a strengthened society reducing the reliance on foreign aid.

As the Confucius proverb states, "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day, but if you teach a man to fish you feed him for life." According to this logic, it is easy to be a proponent of education. But, what if the man was forbidden to set foot near the water. Does education then become futile? Should we keep teaching the man to fish in case he/she has to rely on fishing once again or should the man be taught a new way to find food? This analogy with the provision of education are all questions which this dissertation has attempted to discuss.

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Appendix A:

Overview of professional survey answers regarding why Syrians were not taking advantage of opportunities

Reason	Type	Frequency
Finances (private schools are expensive, lack of cash to enroll in programs etc.)	Resource	8
Work (students must work)	Resource	8
Family obligations (needing to care for a father or sibling)	Causative	1
Lack of knowledge of opportunities	Policy and planning	1
Family or children deprioritizing education	Causative	2
Early Marriage	Causative	1
Capacity of government schools	Resource	2
Paperwork/ documentation issues	Policy and planning	5
Low quality of education	Resource	1

Employment restrictions	Policy and planning	1
Language and curriculum difficult	Policy and planning	3
Competition for scholarships	Resource	1
A lack of Accreditation	Policy and planning	1
Transportation	Resource	4
Racism or discrimination against Syrians	Causative	3
Lack of technology	Resource	1

Appendix B

Guiding Questions for Interviews:

8th graders-Syrian Refugees

1. How old are you?
2. What grade are you in?
3. How long have you studied in Lebanon?
4. How has your experience been in Lebanon?
5. What are your plans for next year?
6. How will you make this happen?
7. Where do you want to be in five years?
8. Where do you see yourself in five years?
9. Is this different than where you want to be in five years? Why?
10. If the war ends tomorrow, where do you see yourself in five years?
11. If the war does not end, where do you see yourself in five years?

8th graders-Lebanese

1. How old are you?
2. What grade are you in?
3. What are your plans for next year?
4. How will you make this happen?
5. Where do you want to be in five years?
6. Where do you see yourself in five years?
7. Is where you see yourself in five years different than where you want to be in five years? Why?

19-year-old-Syrian Refugees and Lebanese

1. How old are you?
2. How long have you been in Lebanon?
3. What are you doing currently?
4. Nine years ago, is this what you thought you would be doing when you turn 19?
5. If not, why is it different?
6. Have there been any difficulties or obstacles between grade 8 and where you are now?
7. Where do you want to be in five years?
8. Where do you see yourself in five years?
9. Is where you see yourself in five years different than where you want to be in five years? Why?